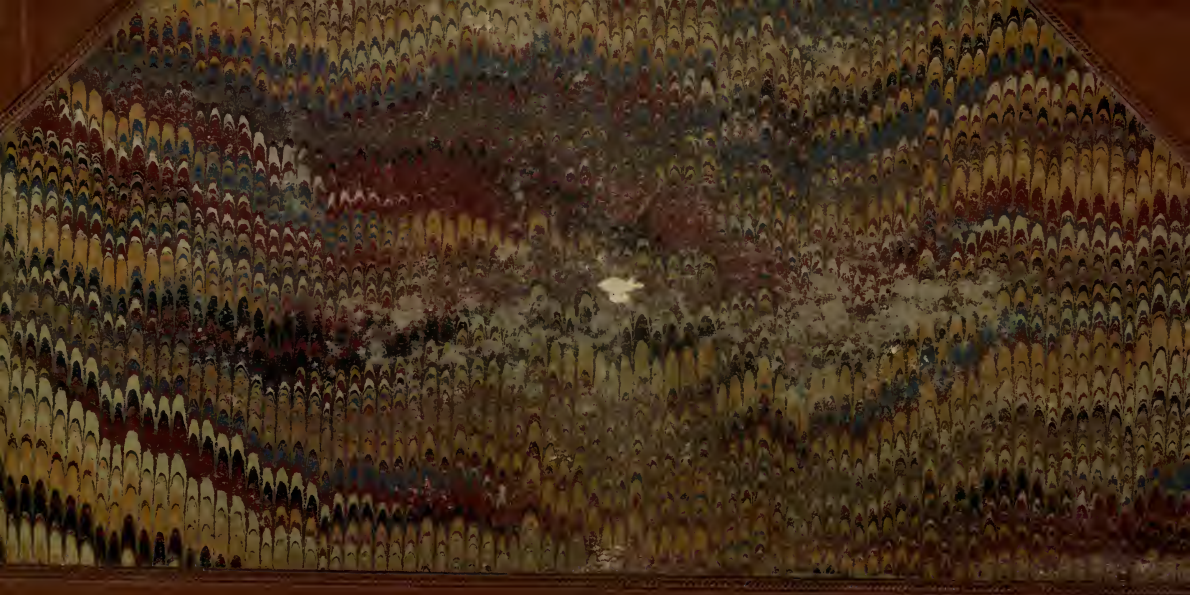

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STANDARD

NOVELS.

N° XXXV.

"No kind of literature is so generally attractive as Fiction. Pictures of life and manners, and Stories of adventure, are more eagerly received by the many than graver productions, however important these latter may be. APULEIUS is better remembered by his fable of Cupid and Psyche than by his abstruser Platonic writings; and the Decameron of BOCCACCIO has outlived the Latin treatises, and other learned works of that author."

MAXWELL

BY THEODORE HOOK.

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,
(SUCCESSOR TO HENRY COLBURN):
BELL AND BRADFUTE, EDINBURGH;
CUMMING, DUBLIN; AND
GALIGNANI, PARIS.

1834.

LONDON:
Printed by A. SPOTTISWOODE,
New-Street-Square.

T. Pickering, pin.t.

G.A. Chocarne, sculp.t

MAXWELL.

"You, Madam" continued he, addressing Kate, and looking at the punch-making apparatus, "seem to know the way to M.r Moss's heart."

London, Published by Richard Bentley, 1837

MAXWELL,

A NOVEL.

BY

THEODORE HOOK.

On the approach of the brig, showing her colours, a dirty old ragged Union Jack was hoisted upon a crooked staff, at the house of the English Consul.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY,
(SUCCESSOR TO H. COLBURN.)
CUMMING, DUBLIN.—BELL & BRADFUTE, EDINBURGH.
GALIGNANI, PARIS.
1834.

MAXWELL.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "SAYINGS AND DOINGS."

"Critics, whene'er I write, in every scene,
Discover meanings that I never mean.
Whatever character I bring to view
I am the father of the child, 'tis true,
But, every babe his christ'ning owes to you.
'The Comic Poet's eye,' with humorous air
Glancing from Watling Street to Grosv'nor Square—
He bodies forth a light ideal train,
And turns to shape the phantoms of his brain,
Meanwhile your fancy takes more partial aim,
'And gives the airy nothings place and name.'"

COLMAN THE ELDER.

REVISED, CORRECTED, AND ILLUSTRATED WITH NOTES,

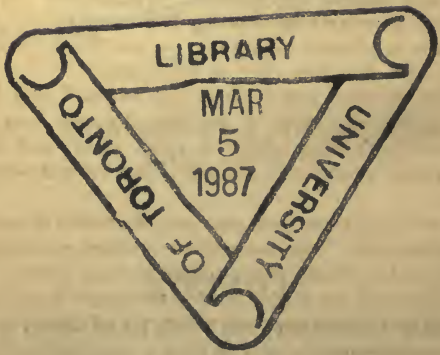
BY THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,
(SUCCESSOR TO HENRY COLBURN):

BELL AND BRADFUTE, EDINBURGH;
CUMMING, DUBLIN; AND
GALIGNANI, PARIS.

1834.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MAXWELL.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

Now, by my modesty, a goodly broker. SHAKSPEARE.

"HELP yourself, and pass the wine, Mousetrap," said Maxwell, the surgeon, sitting after dinner *tête-à-tête* with the tame man of his family, Mr. Godfrey Moss.

"'Gad," said Moss, "what would the world think if they heard *me*, a quiet, middle-aged, retired country gentleman, dignified by the nickname of Mousetrap?"

"Fairly earned by yourself," replied the surgeon. "Dubbed Mousetrap by a young lady, you surely cannot dislike the appellation;—besides, as you know, you have borne it now some few years in this house."

"Two or three and twenty, as I reckon," said Moss, "for it certainly arose in the first instance from your daughter Kitty's being unable to speak plain; and she is now, I rather think, somewhere about her five and twentieth year."

"It certainly arose from your own whimsical character," replied Maxwell: "my poor wife pronounced you a misanthrope; and so Kitty, who could pronounce nothing properly, contrived, by way of making the best of it, to jumble the word into Mousetrap—in which gin of hers you have ever since remained."

"With a little of yours to boot, Maxwell. I say, surgery boy," continued Moss, "before these genteel no-drinking times came into fashion, we have now and then managed a glass or two of toddy over the fire; *you* recounting the adventures of the past day——"

"And you abusing every body I happened to mention," said Maxwell.

"That's not *my* fault, Maxwell," said Moss; "the blame lies upon those who deserve the censure; however, I believe I am much quieter than I used to be. I find the world is past improvement, and it is little use trying to mend it."

"If Kitty were here," said Maxwell.

"And sorry enough I am, she is not," replied Moss; "she is a good girl,—one of my splendid exceptions. What a treasure she has been to *you*, since your poor wife's death!—and when such a domestic cretur as she is,—so fond of home, and so bright an ornament of it,—happens to be out, the loss is severely felt by a toddling body like me,—a thing of habit."

"It is seldom she gads about," said Maxwell, "but the trine temptation of a new play, a popular actor, and a private box, was too much even for *her* philosophy and forbearance, and she yielded."

"Ay, ay, she has got her sweetheart with her," said Moss, taking a huge pinch of snuff; a certain portion of which went the way all snuff should go, while by far the largest detachment scattered itself amongst the folds of his coat round his chest.

"Yes," said Maxwell, "I have hopes of happiness from that marriage, if we can bring it about. Apperton is rich and indefatigable in business, with excellent city connections, and a good property."

"Kate doesn't care a button for him," said Moss, pushing away snuff-box, wine-glass, plate, and all.

"How d'ye mean?" said Maxwell; "she receives his addresses, is civil and kind to him, and has gone so far as to tell me that she has no objection to him."

"Pleasant state of affection upon which two people are to marry," said Moss; "what the creturs call the negative school. Stuff, gammon,—if she takes my advice, she'll never have that 'stockbrokering cretur.'"

"But if she wishes to take mine, she will," said Maxwell.

"Ah! no doubt of that," said Moss, again stuffing his

nose; "you are all for the nibble, as I call it — you have made a large fortune by extensive practice, you have got a son of whom you want to make a gentleman, and you have got a daughter for whom you want to get money in marriage. Mark my words, Mack: I don't say much, but like the birdums in the fable, I think the more. I am not one of your romantic boys, but I know the world; gold does not make happiness — Kittums may give her hand to Apperton, but her heart is not there to give."

"Has she ever made you a confidant, Mousetrap?" said the surgeon.

"Not she — she knows I am not to be had," answered Moss; "she is quite up to me; I enter into no leagues or cabals — I know the world, and know that the more pains a man takes to please, the more he gets abused. I have enough to do to provide for myself and my own wants and worries — I am not going to trouble *my* head with the concerns of any body else."

"Your old system, Moss," said Maxwell; "but do you really mean to say, that you suspect her of having an attachment elsewhere?"

"No," replied Moss; "her mind is too well regulated to suffer the attachment to exist. I don't believe she would give her hand to one, and keep her heart for another — she knows she must not encourage her genuine feelings, and she will conquer them. But she is a woman, and cannot help recollecting — no matter, she's a good cretur — and, if *you* please, we'll drink to her health and happiness."

Moss was quite right in his suspicions. Kate Maxwell *had* lost her heart before she knew Apperton; but he whom she loved had been banished from her presence, and was following an honourable profession in a far distant country, whence, in all human probability, he never would return: and Kate, conscious that her father was inexorably resolved against sanctioning her union with the absent favourite, sought by every means in her power to overcome a feeling which it would have been positive undutifulness to cherish; and purposely mingled more than usual in society, after the departure of the object of her

affections — sedulously avoiding the slightest allusion to him, and tremblingly alive to the painful trial of even hearing his name.

Maxwell himself, to whom the reader has been somewhat unceremoniously introduced, in his own house, was, as may already have been discovered, a surgeon of great skill, and consequent high reputation; and, perhaps, no man could live more happily, more generally beloved, or more universally respected, than he did. His abilities had procured him extensive practice, his practice produced a handsome revenue; and although he was generally considered to have amassed a large fortune, and made himself perfectly independent of the world, still he felt that, while health and fame were yet his own, there was no reason for retiring from a profession, of which he was one of the leaders, and by the continued exercise of which, besides finding occupation for an active mind, he might still accumulate wealth for the benefit of a son and daughter, bequeathed to his paternal care by a fond and affectionate wife, several years before the period at which this narrative commences.

Maxwell had prudently and progressively risen to his present eminence. His first start in life was in a small, neat house, in Hatton Garden, where he commenced practice in the united character of surgeon and apothecary; on his marriage with the daughter of a member of the same profession, he removed to Bedford Row, shaking off the trammels of the shop and bottles, and practising only as a surgeon. In this residence he remained for several years, till his success at the western end of the town induced him to approach the scene of his practice, and shift his quarters to Lincoln's Inn Fields: whence, after the death of his lady, he again removed to one of the streets in the vicinity of Burlington Gardens, where we now find him taking his wine with his friend Mousetrap.

"And where's Master Ned to-night?" said Moss; "is *he* gone to the play to see the deluded creturs act — or is he down the area there, in Stone Buildings, learning to draw conveyances, for which, Mack, between you and me, he is not so fit as a coach-horse?"

"Probably not," said Maxwell.

"Then why do you keep him poking and grubbing down in a cellar, with his nose nailed to a desk all day long? I suppose you expect to see him Lord Chancellor?"

"The road is open to him," said Maxwell.

"Ah! so it is to a great many other idle fellows," said Moss, "and a good many of them take to it; but not the road to the woolsack — he has not a turn that way. He did, by good luck, get a degree at Oxford, without plucking, and, I am told, is as good a puller as there ever was in Christ Church; but, depend upon it, he is not so good a sitter: besides, he's too rich for a lawyer; I never knew a rich man make a lawyer in my life. His poor mother used to talk to me of the law — stuff — trash — gammon; — it was no use affronting her, poor dear old body, but the truth is, he arn't got it in him."

"Why, I admit," said Maxwell, "the constant look-out upon the glacis of Lincoln's Inn Garden, from the sunken story of our friend Diveandpore's chambers, is not an enlivening prospect. However, Moss, if he should be idle, there is his fair cousin, with her large fortune, ready for him."

"What, Jenny Epsworth?" cried Moss, pushing away his box again; — "the demented body! — I think I see her; a cretur with one leg shorter than the other, and a nose like the twisted gnomon of a sun-dial. Trash, Mack! he will never marry she, take my word for it; but, as the country fellows say in my part of the world, he has gotten a friend as 'wull:' — that Major Overall — the little, lying, dandy, traveller chap — will cut out our Neddums — he'll marry — dot and carry one — see if he don't."

"Upon my word, Moss," said Maxwell, "you are more censorious than ever, and you use such extraordinary phraseology, and deliver your ideas in such very odd language, that my new butler, Hopkins, stares with amazement whenever he comes into the room while you are speaking."

"Try him *now*, Mack," said Moss; "the bottle is empty, and as them courting creturs are gone to the play, we must do something to while away time till they come back."

"Ring the bell, Moss," said Maxwell; "I have no visits to make to-night, so I am indifferent about it."

"What, no groans to hear?" said Moss,—"no guineas to get?—no legs or arms to cut off?—deary me, how dull you must find yourself."

The arrival of Hopkins checked the details of Maxwell's supposed miseries, and the new bottle was ordered.

In spite of Moss's caricature of his host's pursuits, it seems pretty clear that none of our fellow-creatures enjoy life more than the successful member of one of the learned professions. There is, it is true, constant toil: but there are constant excitement, activity, and enthusiasm; at least, where there is not enthusiasm in a profession, success will never come — and as to the affairs of the world in general, — the divine, the lawyer, and the medical man, are more conversant and mixed up with them, than any other human beings — cabinet ministers, themselves, not excepted.

The divine, by the sacred nature of his calling, and the higher character of his duties, is, perhaps, farther removed from an immediate contact with society; his labours are of a more exalted order, and the results of those labours not open to ordinary observation; but the lawyer in full practice knows the designs and devices of half our acquaintance; it is true, professional decorum seals his lips, but *he* has them all before him in his "mind's eye,"— all their litigations and littlenesses,— all their cuttings, and carvings, and contrivings. He knows why a family, who hate the French with all the fervour of British prejudice, visit Paris, and remain there for a year or two; he can give a good reason why a man who delights in a well-preserved property in a sporting country, with a house well built and beautifully situated, consents to "*spare it*," at a reduced price, to a man for whom he cares nothing upon earth; and looks at the world fully alive to the motives, and perfectly aware of the circumstances, of three fourths of the unconscious actors by whom he is surrounded.

The eminent medical man stands, if not upon higher ground, at least in a more interesting position. As he mingles with the gay assembly, or visits the crowded ball, he knows the latent ills, the hidden, yet incurable disorders

of the laughing throng by which he is encircled; he sees premature death lurking under the hectic flush on the cheek of the lovely Fanny, and trembles for the fate of the kind-hearted Emily, as he beholds her mirthfully joining in the mazy dance. He, too, by witnessing the frequently recurring scenes of death, beholds the genuine sorrow of the bereaved wife, or the devoted husband,—and can, by the constant, unpremeditated exhibitions of fondness and feeling, appreciate the affection which exists in such and such places, and understand, with an almost magical power, the value of the links by which society is held together.

Far beyond the even tenor of exalted idleness is the happiness which springs from practical utility, varied by recreation and amusement, which the best and most agreeable grades of society afford. The never-failing shot, the infallible billiard-player, however much delighted he may feel with his excellence, cannot enjoy so much positive interest in the sport or the game, as *he* who, ordinarily qualified for the enjoyment of either, has not reduced his bird or his ball, his hazard or his hare, to what may be called a *dead* certainty. There *may be* an anxiety created in the bosom of the sure performer, but it is the anxiety of maintaining an already established reputation, totally distinct from the intrinsic interest in the thing actually to be done, which is felt by those who are sufficiently proficient to render doubt admissible, although the attainment of the object is infinitely more probable than its loss.

Thus it is that the possessor of vast wealth, without a pursuit, takes his enjoyments as mere matters of course, and feels no more pleasure in the luxury with which he is surrounded, than the commoner, in a much lower sphere, experiences in the enjoyment of much more humble pleasures. Enjoyment, indeed, is altogether comparative; and without some variation of the scene, it is impossible properly to appreciate the value of comfort and splendour. To enjoy life with all its acuteness,—to be deeply moved by the sorrows of others, or highly elevated by our own happiness,—it is necessary to mingle with all classes, to see such scenes as naturally fall under the observation of professional men, to hear such tales as meet their ears, and, in short, to par-

ticipate more or less in the various pains and pleasures, which Providence, in its wisdom, has assigned as the lot of those who are forced, as it is colloquially called, "to fight their way through the world." There is more healthful exercise for the mind in the uneven paths of middling life, than there is on the Macadamized road of fortune. Were the year all summer, how tiresome would be the green leaves, and the bright sunshine—as, indeed, those will admit, who have lived in climates where vegetation is always at work.

Maxwell was one of those who had mixed generally with the world, and knew it well. There were points upon which, like all the rest of us, he was blind; and, amongst others, perhaps, the promised happiness of his daughter, and the extraordinary talents of his son, were two. However, so long as his friend Moss continued an inmate of his house, there was no great chance of his either continuing well satisfied with himself, or extremely proud of his children. Plain speaking was Mousetrap's distinctive characteristic; his conversation abounded in blunt truisms, founded upon a course of thinking somewhat peculiar to himself, but which, when tried by the test of human vice and human folly, proved very frequently to be a great deal more accurate than agreeable.

"Are you sure, Mack," continued Moss, as he commenced the fresh bottle, "that that Apperton is as rich as he makes himself out to be? I know some of them brokering boys are worth a million on Monday and threepence on Thursday—all in high feather one week, and poor waddling creturs the next."

"I tell you he is a man of great property," said Maxwell.

"Ah!" said Moss, "you tell *me*, because *he* tells *you*. I never saw any thing the day we went to call on him, but a dark hole of a counting-house, with a couple of clerk chaps, cocked up upon long-legged stools, writing out letters—a smoky fire-place—two or three files, stuck full of dirty papers, hanging against the wall—an almanack, and a high railed desk, with a slit in a panel, with 'bills for acceptance' painted over it;—that 's all stuff—gammon—

trash. I like to see warehouses and hogsheads, and casks and crates, and bales and boxes.—Don't you understand?"

"But Apperton has nothing to do with bales and boxes," said Maxwell; "he is a stockbroker, of first-rate eminence."

"Oh! that's it," said Moss, shaking off the snuff again—"a bull and bear boy!—Why, I suppose now, that chap would not belong to Crockford's for the whole world—and yet all's fair in the alley. Oh!—marry Kitty to *him* by all means—they are the chaps 'wot' makes time-bargains—they speculate for thousands, having nothing in the world, and then at the wind-up of a week or two, pay each other what they call the difference; that is to say, the change between what they cannot get, and what they have not got."

A thundering knock at the street door announced some visiter, or, perhaps, the family party returned from the play. Much to the astonishment of the two convivialists, it turned out to be the latter; and into the parlour, after having proceeded more than half way up stairs towards the drawing-room, bounded Miss Kitty Maxwell, Mr. Apperton, and Mr. Edward Maxwell, junior.

"Where is Mrs. O'Connochie?" said Maxwell.

"She would not come in, sir," replied Kate, kissing her father's cheek with all her usual affectionate kindness; "it is too late, and she is too tired—and Dr. O'Connochie has got a touch of the gout, and ——"

"Well, Kittums," said Moss, "give me your hand, my girl—how have you been entertained at the playhouse?"

"Why," exclaimed Edward, "Kate did nothing but cry all the time Young was acting—and there was Miss ——! What was that pretty girl's name, Apperton?—the heroine—who was forced to marry one man while she was in love with another."

"That's disagreeable enough," said Moss, turning to Miss Maxwell, "arn't it, Kittums?"

"I thought the play infernally stupid," said Apperton; "for *my* part, I did not understand it."

"Umph!" said Moss, bending forwards, and taking a huge pinch of snuff.

"It has made my head ache," said Kitty.

"And made me most uncommonly hungry," said Apperton.

"And me most particularly thirsty," said Edward.

"Oh! the delights of play-going," groaned Moss.

In a few minutes all the requisite refreshments were produced, and, after a somewhat hasty, and not very happy looking repast, the little party broke up for the night. Apperton displayed a wonderful agility in oyster eating — Edward quaffed copious drafts of Combe, Delafield & Co. — Kate spoke little — Maxwell seemed thoughtful — and Moss made himself a large glass of hot gin and water, with sugar in it.

When they separated, Apperton departed for the City — Edward to *his* room — and then Kate to *hers*. Moss put on his great coat, and, arming himself with his umbrella, took his leave. As he shook hands with Maxwell, not choosing to trust himself with words, he made a face inimitably expressive of his conviction that Apperton was a blockhead, and that Kitty was quite aware of it.

The present position of the family may now be gathered by the reader. The matter of fact of Maxwell, and the broad caricature of Moss, will have nearly explained the "existing circumstances."

Kate, perhaps, requires a more minute description. She was, as Moss surmised, at the period of which I speak, some four, perhaps five and twenty. Like Liston in the play, she was not what is called regularly handsome; but she had fine eyes — an expressive countenance — white teeth, and a good figure. Her accomplishments were those which, in these days of refinement, every tolerably educated girl is supposed to possess; her manners were extremely pleasing; her disposition beyond compare amiable; and, having been now for several years accustomed to the entire control and management of the domestic concerns of her surviving parent, promised to be to *him* who should be so fortunate as to win her heart and obtain her hand, the best of all possible good things — an excellent wife.

If we were to take Mr. Moss's view of her evidently intended husband, Mr. Apperton, the stockbroker, we should have very little to do but to set him down for a blockhead,

and pray that he might never arrive at the consummation of *his* happiness, seeing how likely it was to prove the destruction of hers. However, having already premised that old Godfrey was a bit of a caricaturist, we must look at this worshipper of Mammon through another, and, perhaps, a less jaundiced medium.

Apperton was, in the class of society in which he moved, what may be called an average man — the balance on the credit side of his character being made up of worldly knowledge, and a talent (improved by sedulous application and constant practice) for "making money." Moss, in *his* calculation, never took that side of the account into consideration; he saw only Apperton's love of gain, and his devotion to wealth, without entering, per contra, the laudable ambition of rising in the world, and the honourable desire of rendering himself worthy the acceptance of so superior a person as Miss Maxwell.

It is true, that Apperton's mental qualities were somewhat confined — his energies had been directed to one point: — to *him* matters of taste were matters of trouble; his mode of valuing a fine piece of sculpture, or a beautiful picture, was by enquiring what it would fetch, or how much it had cost. For music he had no ear — for poetry, no fancy. The play tired — the opera distracted him. In fact, his mind was in the funds, and his pleasure in his income; there he laboured and toiled. Speculations, the greatest and the most minute, were deemed equally worthy his attention, and a discount to the amount of three halfpence was received by him with as much care and punctiliousness as if it were a sum likely to liquidate the national debt. But he was good natured, and, when pleased and gratified himself, anxious to please and gratify others — so that if Miss Maxwell had no chance of enjoying with him the exquisitely tender affection which only congenial minds and dispositions can feel (all chance of which she had surrendered when she lost the first and only object of her love), she might fairly expect that rational happiness which, founded on esteem and regard, and the suitableness of a match, is the ordinary lot of persons who marry late in life, especially where the woman marries not her first love.

Moss knew every turn of Kate's mind. She was an enthusiast in matters of taste, without being affected or blue; she admired, without envying, talent; and had sufficient judgment to appreciate the works of others, without assuming the airs of criticism, or trying the scheme of imitation. It is clear enough that if she married Apperton (and it seemed a settled thing that it was to be), she would make herself and her husband comfortable — happy, perhaps, is too strong a word; but comfort was quite as much as he would wish for, and quite as much as she could expect. Principle and reason would render her a good wife; and she was greatly encouraged in taking a favourable view of the marriage by the reflection, that her union with Apperton would meet her father's wishes, and, above all, not separate her from his society: for, in case their union took place, it was stipulated that the young, or, rather, the new-married, couple should continue to reside at Maxwell's house, — an arrangement rendered a *sine qua non* on the old gentleman's part, on account of the comforts and advantages which he derived from the presence of his daughter as head of his establishment.

This sort of rational settlement is far too unromantic to be at all interesting; but when it is recollected, that the swain had reached his forty-fourth year, and the nymph her twenty-fifth, some allowance may be made for the unsentimental considerations which filled the mind of the latter, — the affection of the former being directed, over and above the personal and mental attractions of Miss Katherine, to a certain sum of fifteen thousand pounds, three per cent. consols, which was to be transferred to him on the day of the wedding. Far be it from me to surmise that this paltry amount, in any material degree, influenced the addresses of the lover: his acquaintance with Maxwell had originally commenced by Maxwell's employing him, professionally, to invest the savings of his income in different approved securities; and, through that channel, he had become intimate, not only with the affairs of the family, but with the family itself, of which he had latterly appeared as one of the constant associates: for it should be told, that Maxwell never dined out, and, therefore, always kept places at his

table for some half-dozen intimate friends, of whom one or two, or sometimes more, were constantly present at his hospitable board.

Every body has observed the assimilating powers of constant association. In the outset of the acquaintance of Apperton and Miss Maxwell, love never entered either of their heads, or either of their hearts. Apperton was introduced, — came, and dined — passed the evening, with somewhat of restraint — listened to Miss Maxwell's singing without understanding it, — and submitted to Moss's jokes, without relishing them; but time, and a frequent repetition of the visit, smoothed down the difficulties: and after three or four months of that sort of domesticated intercourse, to which we have referred, Miss Maxwell began to feel better pleased when Apperton was there, than when he was not; and Apperton felt happier at Maxwell's than any where else. To Kate, in his absence, Maxwell had spoken highly of Apperton's activity and zeal, in securing him great pecuniary advantages — and praised his clearness and correctness, his readiness and his principle. To him, in Kate's absence, Maxwell, with all the feelings of a fond father, had extolled her excellent qualities — and having this high opinion of his friend and finance minister, threw out hints, not to be misunderstood, of his ready compliance with the offer of any man who could make his daughter happy; and then proceeded to detail his views with regard to her fortune; until, at last, these two persons found themselves, as it were, on the brink of a marriage, never having, up to the moment of which I am speaking, "talked of love."

Katherine, however, had not been left *loverless* during the period of her life at which young ladies generally attract the attention of young gentlemen. The affair of her heart which was blighted, and to which I would rather not refer, was so deeply rooted there, that she rejected offers which might have produced comfort, and even splendour; but at present, upon consulting her feelings, she admitted to herself, — considering, as I have already premised, that she had abandoned all hope of that sort of happiness of which she once had dreamed, — that, in the

worldly point of view, in which she was conscious Apperton would look at it, marriage was a prudent step, especially, permitted as she should be, to remain under her paternal roof, — a stipulation which over-ruled her most serious objection — that the state of woman alone in the world is desolate and helpless: and seeing that, in the event of her beloved parent's death, she would have no living relations nearer than great aunts (and they residing in the north of Scotland), and a madcap brother, who, the moment he came into possession of the old gentleman's property, would certainly marry — perhaps ill, perhaps well — nobody could calculate which — she decided for the acceptance of Apperton: to which decision she definitely came, on the very night in which our story begins; and on which our sarcastic friend, Mousetrap, decided that she "did not care a button for him."

One most important obstacle, however, remained in the way of her just yet accepting the stockbroker; perhaps the reader may already anticipate it.

He had not yet made her an offer.

CHAPTER II.

Are you a suitor to the maid you talk of—
YES or NO? SHAKSPEARE.

THERE are with all great affairs smaller affairs connected, so that, in the watchwork of society, the most skilful artist is sometimes puzzled to fix upon the very little wheel by which the greater wheels are worked. Nobody who saw the anxiety of Ned Maxwell to second the schemes of Apperton, or rather his father (for Apperton did not appear so sensitively alive to her charms or merits), upon the heart and hand of his sister Katherine, would perhaps be prepared to account for his solicitude upon the point, who did not know that the elder Maxwell always expected his son to play croupier at his dinner table, and in that capacity to

do his best to entertain the guests who were seated round it. Not even the representations of Mr. Diveandpore, that evening studies in the basement of Stone Buildings were essential to his son's future elevation in his profession, could induce the surgeon to dispense with the society of this favoured scion of his stock; so that the young gentleman found himself tethered, as it were, to the paternal mahogany — a circumstance little in accordance with his tastes and desires for the enjoyment of that sort of evening diversion which persons at his time of life delight to take, in theatres and other places of public resort and amusement, peculiar to the middling classes of London society. By the marriage of his sister with Apperton, the office of vice-president would devolve, if not entirely, yet at least whenever he desired leave of absence, upon his future brother-in-law, of whose favour, in his father's eye, he had no doubt, and who, from his standing in life and knowledge of the world, was even better calculated to perform the duties and functions of such a station, than the inexperienced youth which Ned professed to be; and who, if he were in fact better initiated or more versed in the ways of the world, than he appeared to be when at home, naturally laboured under a certain degree of awe in the presence of his father, which prevented his exhibiting to their full extent his conversational powers, and talents for amusing a circle of friends, which, upon other occasions, when all restraint was removed, and he suffered his genius to go in a snaffle instead of a curb, were very highly spoken of.

Thus on all hands it appeared to be settled that Miss Maxwell was to be Mrs. Apperton, and upon all occasions when the agreeable society usually at her father's was assembled, people seemed to defer to Apperton as one of the family, and associate him and the daughter of their host in their thoughts, and even in their conversations, as if the thing were actually arranged; and arranged it would have been, long before the period to which we are referring, had not Moss happened to take up his quarters in the house for his annual four months' visit. His constant presence prevented the social confidential after-dinner chat, which had *he* been away would doubtless now and then

have occurred between Apperton and Maxwell upon this most interesting subject: for at hardly any other period of the day did they meet, except, perhaps, to transact pecuniary business; and Heaven knows love and money are as little likely to mingle in the same conversation, as oil and vinegar in the same bottle.

It was evident to those who saw clearly, that Maxwell was intent upon the marriage; and there seemed every day an increased anxiety upon his mind, touching the matter, which was not easily to be accounted for, when the relative situations of the parties were taken into consideration. There was something more than met the eye in the interest which the surgeon appeared to take in the stockbroker, and a mystery in the desire he felt to unite his child to his man of business, (for such, in fact, was Apperton,) which lay beneath the surface. The truth is, that Apperton had assailed Maxwell on his weak side; he had taught him the means, or fancied means, of increasing his already large realised fortune, to an amount far beyond his utmost expectations. These suggestions, which, in fact, originally produced their intimacy, were made during the year in which speculations of every sort were offered to the public; when companies sprang up on every side, and loans were in the market for every nation in the universe; when every man dived into mines, and dabbled in canals; when gold was to be found in granite rocks, and pearls in cockle-shells; and when a thousand per cent. was reckoned too small a return for the capital expended. It was at this period that the skilful financier, the enterprising projector, so thoroughly convinced the surgeon of the certainty of his success in accumulating thousands by an outlay of hundreds, that Maxwell not only confided his funds to the management of this approved Chancellor of his Exchequer, but was anxious to make an alliance for his daughter, which, while it would naturally increase the personal interest of Apperton for the welfare of her family, would place her in the midst of wealth and splendour, and increase her fifteen thousand pounds at least tenfold, under the able administration of her calculating husband.

One evening, at length, the adhesive Dr. Moss happened

to be absent at some club festival, to which he annually repaired, and Edward having fulfilled his diurnal duties at the foot of the table, had got "leave of absence" for an hour or two, and no stranger being present, Maxwell and Apperton found themselves *tête-à-tête* after dinner. The conversation between them had been carried on for more than an hour with an undiminished interest — the subject under discussion being the great advantage likely to arise from the establishment of the North Shields Sawdust Consolidation Company, in which Apperton told Maxwell there were still seventy-four shares to be purchased; they were hundred pound shares, and were actually down at eighty-nine, would be at fifteen premium on the following Saturday, and must eventually rise to two hundred and thirty, for reasons which he gave in the most plausible manner, and which were, in themselves, completely satisfactory, as he said, to the "meanest capacity;" a saying with which it might have been perfectly safe to agree.

Whether Maxwell became a purchaser of the valuable scrip of this corporation or not, is not very important, but certain it is, that after the financial *exposé* of Mr. Apperton had ended, the conversation flagged — each of the characters of the drama sipped his wine, and, sipping, looked at the fire. Maxwell cast his eyes off the grate, and fixed them for a moment upon Apperton — Apperton sighed accidentally, and then sipped again.

"I don't think Kate is looking well," said Maxwell.

"Don't you, sir?" said Apperton.

"She is out of spirits," said Maxwell. "I think there is something on her mind — something she does not like to talk about — I ——"

"It is love, perhaps," said Apperton.

"Umph!" said the surgeon; "*I* have thought of that."

"And of the object, sir?" said the stockbroker.

"Why, partly."

"Major Overall, perhaps?" said Apperton; "or our friend Moss?"

"Moss!" said Maxwell; "you are joking. What!

Kitty in love with Mousetrap? no, no, you haven't hit it yet."

"Nor am I likely," said Apperton. "Whoever is the object of her choice will be a happy man, Mr. Maxwell."

"I am happy you think so," said the surgeon. "Have you never fancied that her affections might have settled upon you?"

"Me! Mr. Maxwell," cried Apperton, who knew exactly to what the observations of his future father-in-law tended, and who was anxious to ascertain his view of the case, and the state of Kitty's mind, before he ventured upon an offer which might not only offend the young lady, and exclude him from the convenient and agreeable run of the house, but even displease her father, and so lose him the influence which he at present possessed over all his worldly property.

"You," said Maxwell. "If I were asked *my* opinion of the state of her feelings, I should say that you are the person upon whom her affections are fixed: however, it is a doubt very easily solved — you have my full sanction to make the enquiry yourself, and I think I can almost insure you a reception agreeable to my wishes and your own."

"Of Miss Maxwell, sir," said Apperton, "we have often conversed; spoken of the arrangements desirable in establishing her in life; of your wish to retain her in your house; of her good qualities; of her valuable acquirements; and of her delightful accomplishments; but we have hitherto spoken only hypothetically of her husband:— am I indeed to understand that I have your permission and authority to address her as a lover?"

"Both, Apperton, both!" cried the old gentleman; "do it this very evening — strike while the iron is hot. I have two visits to make: let me see by your countenance on my return, that the wish of my heart is realised, and I shall be truly happy."

"I can hardly flatter myself with success," said Apperton; "for frequent and almost confidential, I may call them, as my conversations have been with your daughter, I do not recollect that love ever formed the topic of any one of them."

"So much the better," said Maxwell; "what does Sterne say, that love is no more made by talking of it, than a black pudding would be. Habit, association, assimilation of tastes, communion of thought, kindness without pretension, solicitude without effort, a tacit agreement and a silent sympathy; these are the excitements and stimulants of the only sort of love that is worth thinking of. The die-away, sighing, sonnet-writing days of boyish passion are past with you, Jack; but the tempestuous violence of youth has been supplanted by a rational, well regulated, prudential feeling, which, after all, is the feeling desirable in this world, where married people, no more than single ones, can live upon dew or sleep on rosebuds. Reason is the sure foundation of all schemes for mortal happiness; and you and Kitty are, to *my* mind, about as reasonable a pair of God's creatures as I know. I hear the carriage driving up to the door — I must be off to my appointments. It is contrary to my usual principle, and certainly to my ordinary practice, to move after dinner, but I have two patients to-night in a precarious state: one, a man of the highest class, the other, one of the lowest; — to the former I go, because his rank enforces the attention which his wealth amply repays; to the latter, because his poverty and distress would leave him desolate, if somebody did not volunteer to watch over his sufferings. However, neither of these vtsits will occupy any great length of time, and it will not soon occur again, perhaps, that we shall be without visitors. Evening, the poet tells us, is the congenial season for love-making — woman's heart and looks —

> —— 'Kindle when the night returning
> Brings the genial hour for burning.'

And so, Jack, as faint heart never won fair lady——"

"——The carriage is at the door, sir," said a servant, inopportunely entering the dinner parlour.

"I am coming," said Maxwell. "This, Jack, is the very time for you — lose it not, as you value our dear love."

"You shall be obeyed, sir," said Apperton, "let the result be what it may. I must, however, add my apprehensions that ——"

"——Not a word—not a word about them," cried the surgeon. "Kate knows my wishes—I firmly believe they are in accordance with her own—so success attend you;" saying which, and shaking his intended son-in-law cordially by the hand, Maxwell stepped into his carriage to visit his patients, and Apperton proceeded deliberately up stairs, to prefer his suit to Kitty, in the drawing-room.

Arrived there, he found the amiable Kate alone, but assiduously employed in arranging papers relative to the domestic concerns of her father's establishment, seeking, as it were, a moment's relief from the ordinary routine of arrivals and visitors, to bring up the arrears of business, to which with exemplary diligence and readiness she applied herself in her parent's service.

"At work, industrious treasurer?" said Apperton, as he approached the sofa where she was seated; "always doing good, Miss Maxwell."

"Always endeavouring to make myself useful when I can," said Kate, still proceeding with her avocation. "Will you ring the bell, and order yourself coffee?" continued she.

"None for me," said Apperton, placing himself on a chair next to the sofa.

"You always take coffee?" said Kate.

"Not to-night," replied the lover, whose embarrassment became, if not yet visible to his companion, quite unequivocal to himself. "I have been speaking on matters of great interest to your father."

"Possibly," said Kate; "but how they should interfere with your taking a cup of coffee now, I do not very clearly comprehend. I believe the consultations of the divan itself are enlivened by the enjoyment of that fragrant beverage."

"Yes," said Apperton, not knowing exactly what he was saying, nor probably what she alluded to, "I believe they are — but —" and here he paused, and watching the taper fingers of his amiable companion as they untied this parcel, and arranged that packet, he began to feel a nervous anxiety to commence *the* subject, and a doubt upon his mind whether he dare venture upon the decisive preliminary measure of catching hold of one of Kate's hands,

by way of leading to the discussion in which he so earnestly desired to engage her. A silence ensued.

"Why, what *is* the matter, Mr. Apperton?" said Kate—"has there been any bad news in the City, and a proportionate fall, or any good news, and a consequent rise in your favourite funds, which has been disagreeable to you?"

"I am in a situation of great difficulty," said Apperton, "and I hardly know how to extricate myself."

"Condescend to consult me," said Kate, "and I will advise without fee or reward."

"I believe you would be the very best councillor I could consult," said Apperton, "since you have not only the power of suggesting the best course for me to take, but the still greater power of ending all my difficulties."

"I—I—have the power of influencing your fate?" said the young lady.

"Indeed you have," said Apperton, gaining something like courage from the apparent good will of Miss Kate to keep up the conversation in the strain he most desired. "I look to you, Miss Maxwell, not only as my best adviser, but the sole judge in my cause. We have been now for some time so constantly associated—our interests in your excellent father so shared and divided between us—our amusements so much in common—our—" During the utterance of these few words Kate's heart beat rapidly—the writings before her lost their distinctness—her cheeks flushed—a chill ran over her limbs—she breathed quickly. Apperton saw the emotion he had created, and caught her hand, which had just dropped the pen—the seizure was unresisted—he pressed it to his lips—they spoke not—again he pressed her hand—she turned her fine expressive eyes towards him, half filled with tears, as they were—he felt her tremble. At such a moment silence is the most convincing eloquence—it was clear what must be the result—he drew her towards him—essayed to speak—her eyes were again downcast, and she seemed to wait in dread and suspense the words that were to follow.

The sudden stoppage of a carriage, succeeded by a loud rattling knock at the street door, and a peal upon the bell, announced an arrival.

"Oh! for mercy's sake let me go," exclaimed Kate, jumping up: "pray, pray, put away these papers for me—I cannot be seen at this moment. Who can these people be?"

"Promise to return soon, Kate," said Apperton, resolved to fix his fate upon her answer to the simple request, which, if granted, would, he thought, decide the greater one.

"I will," said Kate, covered with blushes; and with a look that even a stockbroker could not misconstrue, she passed through the back drawing-room to the second staircase, in order to escape from the visitors—there was no light—Apperton attended her to the door. Some mystic, magical, masonic sign, I suppose, had during that short interval confirmed his hopes, for he returned to the drawing-room glowing with the proud consciousness of conquest, thrilling with pleasure, and not quite certain whether he stood upon his head or his heels.

"Mr. Moss and Major Overall," said a servant, announcing the arrivals.

Two worthies from the other side of the Styx would have been more welcome to Apperton than the snarling Godfrey and the superlative Major.

"Hey dey," said Moss, "where's Kate?—what's gone with the Kittum cretur?—what, no tea—no coffee, and very little fire—sad doings. Where's the grand carver himself—what's gone with Maxwell?"

"He is labouring in his vocation," said Apperton; "visiting his patients."

"While I'm losing mine," said Moss. "So that's the way—he goes peeping into the holes, and scraping bones, and tyeing up legs to get money, in order to throw it away in the hunt after more. Never mind, we must have some tea and toast—eh, Major?"

"I never take tea," said the Major—a fair, sharp-set man, with large blue eyes, and a small figure, a shrill voice, a dominant passion for superlatives, and a superlative contempt for his own country, which he incessantly expressed, in tones the shrillest that ever were heard—"never—no, never take tea—depend upon it tea is vulgar—terrible

— dreadful — unwholesome — poisonous — destructive ; coffee, when you can get it good, which one never does in England, is healthy — refreshing — excellent — but tea — coarse — low — horrid."

" Well, well — never mind, Major," said Moss — " I have never set my foot out of England yet, and never will if I can help it ; and certainly not, till there is a suspension bridge across the Straits from Dover to Calais. I like my tea, — but then I must have my Kittums to make it for me. Stockbroker-boy, ring the bell — I'll do as much for you when I 'm as young. Let 's know where the cretur is ; *she* is not gone visiting, I suppose ?"

" I rather think Miss Maxwell is not very well," said Apperton.

" Harassed — worried, poor thing," said Moss, — " thinks too much of days that are gone. Has she been out of the room long ?"

" Not very long," said Apperton.

" I say," said Moss, " have you been talking some of your love nonsense to her, and so driven her away ?"

Apperton would with pleasure have exterminated him on the spot.

" Not a fair question, doctor," said the Major — " love is not a subject to talk about ; not that there is any such thing as love in England ; climate too damp — dismal — dark — foggy — wretched — consumptive — agueish — dull — cold — cheerless. Italy, land of song — sky bright blue — all genial — stars sparkling — moon like silver — bright — splendid. Jove — wonderful — delightful ; and the women — oh !"

" Ah, I dare say they are mighty fine creturs," said Moss ; " but I am quite contented with the beautiful red and white of our own charming countrywomen."

" Red and white !" cried the Major, in a tone that reverberated through the room ; " horrid — low — coarse — vulgar ; — red — white ! unnatural ! — Brown — olive — black hair — eyes, jet — splendid — fine — exquisite — soft — delicious — wonderful !"

" Make my best compliments to Miss Maxwell," said Moss to a servant who had answered the bell, " and ask

her if she is likely soon to be visible; and if I am to have any tea, or perish with thirst before she comes."

"I expect Maxwell back every minute," said Apperton.

"I hope he will come soon," said the Major, "for I must go to the opera. Ned is there to night—Medea—Jove—grand—wonderful—magnificent—splendid—bold—fine—majestic!"

"Trash—gammon," said Moss; "I'm like Mungo in the play—'What good me hear me no understand.'"

"The music you can comprehend, Mr. Moss," cried the Major—"the universal language of the soul, Oh, Jove! is it not fine—wonderful—splendid!"

"I like to be pleased, better than astonished," said Moss.

"And for *my* part, Moss," said Apperton, you are so deucedly fastidious, that I should be very much astonished if you ever *were* pleased."

"Well said, stockbroker," cried Godfrey; "that wouldn't be bad in the alley, or in that civilised club of yours, where, if a stranger gets in by accident, you cut off his tail, or stick his wig full of pens till he looks like a porcupine."

"Pens!" said the Major, shuddering, "horrid—coarse—low—vulgar—detestable—shocking! Jove—terrible!"

In the midst of these exclamations Maxwell arrived, and led in his daughter, who appeared unable to stand alone, and seemed as if she could sooner have died than look at Apperton. "What, back from the club so soon?" said Maxwell, "I didn't expect you much before supper time."

"Yes, Mack," said Moss; "the Major is of the new no-wine school; he is going to the opera, and I had no means of getting home unless he gave me a lift; so, as I knew my child here wouldn't mind giving me some tea, here I am, and happier here than any where else."

Maxwell took Apperton aside and led him into the unlighted drawing-room, and Moss began, according to custom, to play with what he was pleased to call his Kittum's paws—meaning thereby the delicate hands of Miss Maxwell; but the eyes of the poor girl followed the object of

her thoughts. She was conscious that her father was congratulating Apperton upon the successful issue of his suit; for, as she stood committed, she had told the whole history of their conversation to Maxwell the moment he returned, had repeated all that passed, and owned herself pledged and plighted to his favourite suitor.

Never were two people more perfectly *de trop* than Mr. Godfrey Moss and Major Overall at this moment; nor could they very well avoid perceiving it. Moss, who was as quick as lightning, and discovered great truths from small events, while Kate had crossed the room for her handkerchief, which lay on an opposite sofa, whispered to the Major, "The ice is broken — I'd lay my life the stockbroker has popp'd——"

"Curious!" exclaimed the Major. "Strange — eh — wonderful!"

"I say, Kate," said Godfrey to Miss Maxwell, in a whisper, "I say, d'ye mean to have him?"

"I don't know what you mean," said she, with a face perfectly crimson.

"You *do* though," said Moss, taking a huge pinch of snuff. "Well, my girl, I hope you'll be happy if you do have him — I don't see why you should not, bu t still ——"

"Pray be quiet," said Kate, in a state to which nobody but a privileged man of the first class would have ventured to bring her — "I must leave the room if you go on."

"What! and give me no tea?" said Moss.

"The servants will give you tea."

"Thank you," said Moss; "no — no — my privilege here is that *you* make it for me, and give it me with those snowy hands, else would I not touch it."

"Upon my honour I must run away," said the Major. "Will you forgive me, Miss Maxwell? Jove — nothing but a positive engagement could draw me hence — I call this the paragon of English houses — charming, agreeable, delightful, sociable. May I call to-morrow to give you a description of the evening? — Your brother is to be with us — we are to meet — charming fellow, Ned Maxwell — excellent — good — capital — agreeable — elegant — clever —

delightful—splendid. Adieu—good night. Mr. Moss, good night. I won't interrupt the *tête-à-tête* in the next room—horrid business—terrible—dreadful—distracting—infernal—Jove—adieu. I can find my way—good night—good night."

Saying, or rather squeaking which, the Major took his departure, and by so much was Kate relieved; for although for once she would rather have been without her ancient ally, Mousetrap, still his presence was not so irksome upon the present occasion as that of the Major, whose views and pretensions were as clear to Moss as noon-day, and whose violent affection for Ned Maxwell, he perfectly well knew, had its origin in a desire to detach him from the scheme of marrying the rich and ricketty Miss Epsworth, upon whose fortune the Major himself had a most subtle design.

His departure was the signal for Maxwell's return to the front room, accompanied by Apperton; nor had they long been there, before the natural feelings of the younger couple, and the great gratification of Maxwell himself at the result of the affair, began to develope themselves; and after a certain degree of blushing and laughing, and something like weeping, Moss was let into the secret: and having wished the *young* folks all sorts of happiness, in his odd and whimsical way, he and Maxwell retired to one corner of the drawing-room to play a quiet game of chess, leaving Kitty and her husband elect to descant in a *tête-à-tête*, in another corner, on the delights of rational love, and the prospects of happiness afforded by an union so agreeable to all parties, where the affection by which they were inspired possessed none of the fierceness of ill-judged passion, but was founded upon esteem and friendship, and a long, close, and unprejudiced observance of each other's conduct, manners, accomplishments, and qualifications; a dissertation which ended in the mutual declaration of the parties, that no two people in the whole world were so happy as they.

The wonted arrangements for supper (a meal continued in Maxwell's house from the sociable times of his youth) put an end to the dialogue, at about the same period at

which the chess party had concluded their warfare; the conversation became more general, Maxwell was in good spirits, Moss good-humoured, and all went extremely well until the party broke up, each full of the thoughts of what had occurred. Apperton, delighted at his success, seemed to tread on air as he returned to the City; Maxwell kissed and blessed his daughter with fervour and enthusiasm; Moss muttered, "It will come to no good," loud enough to be heard, before he was well out of the hall; and Kate lay awake until near five o'clock in the morning, about which time she fell asleep and dreamed that her first and only love had just returned to England with a large fortune.

CHAPTER III.

——— Oh! I will keep this secret.
No racks, no shame shall ever force it from me. DRYDEN.

THE reader has by this time become in some measure intimate with the domestic concerns of a family in the middling class of society; that class in which, more generally than in a higher sphere, true happiness is to be found. Whether Mr. Moss, whose inauspicious augury might have been overheard by Maxwell's servants as he departed (and most probably was) was justly prophetic or not, time only must determine. It will be my duty to trace the progress of the plighted pair through the paths of matrimonial life. In the meantime, and before the important ceremony is performed, which is to unite them eternally, let us for a moment glance at the prospects and pursuits of the volatile Ned, of whom, at present, my reader knows but little.

With regard to the choice of a profession for him, Moss was perfectly right, and Maxwell certainly wrong. He had not one qualification for the bar; for, besides not being poor, he had neither patience nor perseverance, nor a disposition to drudge and turmoil, and copy conveyances till his fingers ached, in the society of young men whose tastes

were congenial to their pursuits, and whom he voted bores and asses, because they were seriously intent upon their future success in their professional career.

It was an ungracious task for Diveandpore, under whom he was placed, to repeat his feelings and apprehensions on the subject to the elder Maxwell; but when he acceded to his son's constant absence from chambers in the evenings, the compliance with his father's desire upon the point was couched in language, which, to a less fond and prejudiced parent, would have plainly betrayed the conviction of the lawyer, that as far as ultimate results were to be regarded, it mattered very little whether he attended in the evenings, or even in the mornings.

As it must, therefore, seem pretty evident to the reader that Ned Maxwell was not likely ever to grace the bench, even if he were called to the bar, it may be as well to inform the same patient personage, that Ned, even before the period to which we now particularly refer, had determined in his own mind never to marry Miss Epsworth. He, knowing, or rather being assured of his father's opulence by his crony, the stockbroker, naturally argued with himself thus: — Why should I marry one of Byron's "dumpy women," for the sake of money, when I have money enough of my own — why sacrifice my youth and happiness to the filthy lucre of gain? — and as for disappointing *her*, there's Major Overall ready to jump — aye, down her throat, if she would but smile engagingly enough to give him the opportunity, and ready to carry her off to Florence, and diet her upon maccaroni and salad, in marble saloons, to the utter annihilation of all her English ideas and feelings; — and, under the circumstances, and at *his* age, Ned Maxwell was right.

It seems to me, moreover, in some degree necessary, that I should still further initiate the reader into the *arcana* of the Maxwell establishment, and point out what may appear, at first sight, some of the *désagrémens* of the professional life which I have endeavoured so much to extol, and so anxiously to advocate.

At certain seasons Mr. Maxwell was in the habit of delivering lectures, in a room called the theatre, at the

back of his house; which lectures, aided by a demonstrator, selected from amongst the ablest practical men in the profession were carried on, not without illustrations afforded by the dissection of sundry bodies, procured for the purpose, and housed in the "stilly night," in a receptacle contrived for the purpose; to which an entrance from a dark and retired mews was secured, through which secluded portal, not only the dead subjects for consideration, but the living tyros for whose improvement they were furnished, made their "entries and their exits." During this particular period of the year Maxwell himself was more nervous and irritable than at any other: his feelings seemed in a constant whirl; and his mind, divided between the anxiety for research and information, and the constant apprehension of having his house pulled down by an ignorant rabble, was in a perpetual ferment. "Lecture time," in fact, was a season of dread and disagreeables to all the members of the family; and Moss, who never was over delicate in his observations, used to speak of it in terms which, as they were not particularly pleasant to those who *heard* them used, shall not offend the eyes of my readers.

It is here also absolutely necessary to state (however uncomfortable the admission of the fact may render the more sensitive portion of the public), that in the pursuit of his studies, or rather for the advantage of those who studied under him, Maxwell had, like all his brethren, a sort of tacit understanding with a race of men, whose calling, however useful it may be, is held in utter abhorrence by the world, and who were in the habit of furnishing the aforesaid subjects for his dissecting-room. With these nocturnal caterers for scientific knowledge Maxwell had occasional confidential communications, which were not unfrequently held when his family thought, or chose to think, that he was poring over books, or examining "preparations;" and it was upon *him* — at least he always said so — that the two sharpers who bargained for half-a-crown to remove a drunken man from a neighbouring alehouse, played their shameful trick.

They agreed with a certain landlady who could by no means rid her house of an intoxicated guest, to carry him

home, if she would reward their labours with half-a-crown: a proposition to which the helpless widow most readily assented. A sack was procured, into which they thrust the unconscious convivialist, and conveyed him to the door of Maxwell's surgery; where, late as it was, Maxwell himself was *studying*. A knock announced the arrival of the rogues — the professor anticipating the cause of the summons, opened the door.

"Subject?"—

"Yes — male. —

"Price?"—

"Eight guineas."

"Agreed — bring him in," said Maxwell, "and I will fetch the money."

The surgeon proceeded to count out his cash, and having caused the sack and its contents to be placed withinside a room on the right hand of the passage, discharged his debt, fastened the door, and proceeded to untie the bag which contained his newly acquired treasure, when a voice from within exclaimed, "I say, come, none of your nonsense — what are you at?"

In an instant Maxwell saw how he had been treated, and, opening the door, called lustily after the two fellows, who had nearly reached the end of the mews. Determined not to be easily beaten, he pursued, and nearly came up with them, when they called a halt, and made show of battle.

"What d'ye want with us, sir?" said one of the fellows, conscious that during the prevalent popular excitement upon the question, no surgeon in Maxwell's circumstances dare appeal to the police—"what d'ye want with us?"

"Why," said Maxwell, breathless with rage and running, "you villains, that's no subject I've bought of you."

"'Tis a subject, though," said the other; "and a deuced queer subject too."

"Yes," said Maxwell, "it is a man, but he's alive!"

"Alive!" said the other—"is he? — why then, as you are a doctor, sir, you may kill him when you want him."

With which pointed reply they again took to their heels, and were out of sight in a minute.

After this shameful imposition, which, contrary to the respectable evidence of Mr. Joseph Miller, Maxwell used gravely and positively to declare had been actually practised upon himself, he became more than ever cautious in his proceedings; and about the period so much dreaded in his family — "lecture-time,"— was wont to pay more frequent visits to the receptacle for subjects than he had been formerly in the habit of making.

It may therefore be easily imagined, that however anxious he might be for the conclusion of the affair between Kate and Apperton, and however evident it must be that they had no occasion to postpone the ceremony, in order to afford time for maturing the charms of the bride, or increasing the steadiness and experience of the bridegroom; still the lecture-season would be a very uncomfortable period at which to fix the "nuptial celebration." *That* over, Maxwell thought he might indulge himself with a little relaxation, and, after despatching the happy couple to some rural seclusion for the enjoyment of the honeymoon, join them with his friend Moss, at one of the nearest watering-places, where, in the society of his happy children, and the enjoyment of fresh air and wholesome exercise, he might lay in a stock of comfort for his life, and at all events a stock of health adequate to the expenditure of the coming season, the greatest part of which was to be spent in the apartments of the sick and in the society of the suffering.

Moss, who had a great turn for nauticals, and moreover a strong affection for shrimps and lobsters (the shelly-creturs, as he used to call them), joined in this arrangement with high delight, and anticipated what he styled a "sniff of the briny" with evident pleasure.

To Kate the lecture-season, at all times disagreeable, now appeared perfectly odious; and the occasional introduction to her father's table of select specimens of pale-faced pupils, who were invited in batches to dinner before the dissertations of the evening, became more than ever unpleasant, now that a new scene had opened to her view, and that she felt it her duty — to say no more — to devote her thoughts

and attention to her intended husband, whose assiduous manner and unremitting solicitude for her happiness and comfort (after *his* fashion) excited the greatest satisfaction on the part of Maxwell, and obtained him occasionally a good word from the grumbling Godfrey Moss.

With all his care and all his kindness, however, it must be admitted that after Kate had opened her heart to receive his love, with a perhaps somewhat unreasonable expectation of something like ardour and enthusiasm, she anticipated a perpetuity of disappointment in the worldliness of his ideas, the limited expanse of his mind, and a too frequent recurrence to self, and what is called prudence, to suit even *her* — for the best regulated female mind is tinctured with an enthusiasm wholly unknown to calculating man. Woman theorises on the world and its ways, and feels that she could sacrifice anything, everything, for the object of her affection. Man, — particularly such a man as Apperton — looks at both sides of the question, or, as *he* would have said, examines the debit and credit side of the account. This particular man, Apperton, had not the slightest touch of romance in his whole character; and if he ever had a predisposition to such an amiable weakness, his growing prudence, and the constant ridicule exercised by Moss upon anything like sentiment or feeling, had completely obliterated every spark and scintillation of it from his mind.

"Where shall it be, then?" said Katherine, "you have only to fix, and I shall be happy to accede to your proposition."

"No, by no means," replied the lover; "*you* must decide, and *I* shall obey."

This was with reference to the watering-place to which they were to retire to pass the honey-moon, since watering-place, by the influence of Moss, Maxwell had announced it to be.

"What say you to Hastings?" said Miss Maxwell.

"Hastings?" said Apperton, snarlingly.

"The country about it," said Kate, "is pretty; the situation sheltered, to suit my father; there are many agree-

able objects in the neighbourhood, and the spot itself is historically interesting."

"So it is," said Apperton, "and I dare say it is a nice place enough; but they gave some friends of mine, last year, an infernal bad dinner at an inn there — thirteen shillings a bottle for claret — and the fish not over good."

"Well, then," said Kate, "the Isle of Wight — a perfect paradise?"

"Yes, the pictures I have seen of *that* are very pretty," said Apperton; "but then there's all the trouble of the sea, and additional expense and uncertainty."

"Well then, Brighton?" said the nymph.

"Why, yes, Brighton, I think, is best," replied the swain. "It's nearest to town."

"Not so secluded as it might be," sighed the bride elect.

"Not quite secluded," said Apperton, "but sufficiently so. If you like retirement, any of the small streets away from the sea would answer; and the rents, I suppose, are much lower in those parts of the town than on the cliffs."

"Ah!" sighed Kate again.

"They tell me the beef isn't good at Brighton," continued the stockbroker; "but I dare say we shall be very happy; the mutton, my friend Hopkins says, is famous, and fish I know is uncommon cheap; and, besides, there are stages to town almost every hour, so that one can run up to business when it gets dull."

There was no romance in this — hardly enough of pleasurable anticipation to make Apperton's objections interesting — however, whenever he came out with his matter-of-fact prosing, poor Katherine sighed, and thought of ———, but I have promised not to say whom.

"Amoret and Phillida," cried Moss, from the front drawing-room; "come, come, tea-time, tea-time; surely you have had enough of your honey stuff and twaddle. Ring the bell, stockbroker, let's have up the toast, and the twanky: you have plenty of time for cooing when I am not here — I like none of your turtle work, unless with plenty of green fat."

"We must go," said Kate, "or my dear Mousetrap will be angry."

"Where's your father, Kittums?" said Moss, "pottering about in the surgery, I suppose? Well—if I had his money—his nibble, as I call it—I'd leave the dead creturs in their graves."

"Science requires the exertions of scientific men," said Apperton; "no man could mend a clock, if he did not know how it was made—he must look at the works before he can regulate the machinery."

"Mighty good," said Moss; "but the simile won't hold; you can't work it out. If I were you, I'd never attempt to be figurative except in 'Change Alley."

"Mr. Moss," said Miss Maxwell, "let us consult *you* about our retreat."

"What retreat?" said Moss.

"Why after our marriage," said Apperton.

"Ugh," said Moss, thrusting half a handfull of snuff into his already curled-up nostrils; "your retreat! there's no retreating after marriage."

"Now don't be cross," said Katherine, who saw that Moss was about to exhibit, in plainer terms than she thought would be agreeable to Apperton, his real sentiments upon their union; "you know what we mean—where shall we go to?"

"Oh, to spend the honeymoon!" said Moss. "Into solitude, with four horses and two postilions, a man servant, and a woman servant, all covered with white ribands, by way of privacy,—'gad, I don't know—thank my stars, I never tried that scheme of happiness."

"We were thinking of Brighton," said Apperton.

"By way of seclusion!" said Moss. "Well, Brighton will be as good a residence as any other; there's nobody there knows much of either of *you;* and the place has got so big, that you may be as snug as you please: a large town and a large party are the best possible shelters for love matters. Ay, go to Brighton—the prawns for breakfast, the Wheatears (as the cockneys delicately call them, without knowing what they are talking about,) for dinner, and the lobsters for supper, with a cigar, and a

little ginnums and water, whiffing the wind, and sniffing the briny out of one of the bow-window balconies—that's it—Brighton's the place, against the world."

"Well, then, Brighton let it be," said Apperton; "and you, who seem to know all the advantages of the place, shall be appointed caterer. For as to trusting to servants in a place like *that*, I declare I would as lief be hanged."

"Hanged, would you," said Moss; "what, like the respectable merchant who suffered, as they call it, for murder this morning?"

"Oh, my dear Mr. Moss," cried Katherine, "don't talk of that."

"Talk of it, why there's nothing else talked of, that I hear," said Moss; "a gentleman criminal is too rich a treat to be overlooked; and a murder in good society forms a tale of middling life, much too interesting to be passed over in a hurry."

"Ah!" said Apperton, "I knew Hanningham well; and certainly I should have said he was the last man likely to commit such an act—but there's no trusting to appearances."

"True, stockbroker," said Moss, "I never *do* trust to them, though others do." And here he cast one of those eloquent glances across the table at Kate, in which he was accustomed silently to express his unconquerable dislike of her betrothed.

Just at the time when this conversation took place, the feelings of the public had been greatly shocked, and their interest deeply excited, by the commission and expiation of one of those great crimes, which every now and then agitate society. A merchant of eminence had, in a fit of passion, it was supposed, but never exactly known, from the nature of the evidence, shot his partner dead. The case against him was so plain and clear, that his previous high character, and the respectability of the station which he filled in the world, made no impression upon the jury; the judge, with every disposition to be lenient, saw no probability of staying the strong arm of the law, and the unhappy victim of irritation had suffered its last penalty on the morning of the day to the evening of which we are

now referring. He had been executed at Horsemonger Lane prison, on the scaffold where Despard and his associates paid the forfeit of their mercenary treason, and where a treacherous friend had before yielded up his life for a murder not very dissimilar from that which had that morning been expiated.

The day had been congenial to the dreadful consummation of the law — heavy and incessant rain had deluged the town; and the curiosity of the people had been so far cooled by the weather, that a much smaller concourse of spectators than was expected had assembled to witness the execution, which was with great difficulty got through; the incidental ceremonies were much abridged, and, in short, it seemed as if nature — or that which is called by the thoughtless, nature — had borne testimony to the guilt of the culprit, and thus awfully confirmed the justice of the sentence. which had doomed the wretched criminal to an ignominious death.

Yet such is human fallibility, that the very magnitude of his crime had rendered the murderer an object of interest, particularly amongst the better classes of society; and even the tenderest hearted of the tender sex were not wanting in excuses and palliation: — "His partner must have been a villain to have provoked him" — "Hanningham was such a pleasant, amiable man" — "so popular" — "they did not believe he could be guilty" — "he never could be hanged" — "he would destroy himself in prison" — "he must be reprieved" — "his sentence would be commuted." And then they read, with the deepest attention, that the prisoner, at the trial, was dressed in black; that he occasionally conferred with his counsel, and several times, during the summing up of the jury, was observed to apply a white handkerchief to his forehead; nay, in his own mercantile circle, bets were offered, first as to his acquittal, then as to his pardon, and wagers of hats (a sporting *medium* in the civic world) were freely laid on either side; while in the Stock Exchange policies were actually opened to pay so much, to secure so much more, if he were actually executed.

It is extraordinary, but not more strange than true, that

such a sensation should be excited, when gentlemen suffer; but so it is: and certainly of all the culprits of middling life, who have publicly exhibited themselves on the last stage of existence, Hanningham, the London merchant, created, or seemed at the time to create, the most powerful effect upon society.

"Well, then, we are decided for Brighton," said Katherine.

"And a good decision too," said Moss; "Tunbridge Wells is like Cranbourn Alley carried to Clapham Common; Bognor, with its pebble-stone rocks, dulness below misery; Hastings, a row of houses in a five's court; Worthing, a bad imitation of its neighbour; Bath, a tea-kettle, always boiling and steaming; and Cheltenham, a cockney edition of Hammersmith; — no, no, Brighton for ever. But pray, Kittums, when is the ceremony to take place?"

Kate blushed to the eyes — Apperton seemed to expect *her* to make a reply — she wished to hear what the lover would say to account for a delay, which, after the enthusiastic reception of his offer by her father, seemed to her rather unaccountable.

"Why," said the tender swain, looking at his beloved, "I want to manage it, so as to get over next settling day."

"What!" cried Moss, "no chance of waddling?"

"Nonsense," said Kate, "what do you mean?"

"Oh! *he* knows," said Moss; "the wind-up is sometimes serious."

"Business sometimes presses," said the stockbroker; "and I should like to get rid of all my work before I left town, which, at any time, is rather inconvenient to me, but particularly this season."

Poor Kate! every word her accepted lover uttered sounded disappointment in her ears; for though, as I have already shown, she expected none of that buoyant, unearthly feeling which fills young hearts and ardent minds, in her union with Apperton, still she — *even* she — *did* think that he kept his anticipations somewhat too near the earth. However, he was a man of business; and it was all for the best; and romance in the City, or sentiment in

the Alley, would be thrown away; and so she went on "never minding" it, until she began to settle down into complacent discussions of matter-of-fact, and an assiduous calculation of expenses and consequences, for which, be it understood, the character of her past life had not ill prepared her.

There were moments, however, when the present, compared with the past, seemed like one sad blank. Katherine, on the eve of marriage, looked to her father's death as the greatest calamity that could befall her; for though she gave herself to Apperton, her love, her hope, her reliance, were in her parent; and this decided affection was another proof, if more were wanting, of the absence of that ardour which is the orthodox concomitant of mutual passion.

In the midst of these speculations as to their retreat for the honeymoon, the contrivers were disturbed by the arrival of Maxwell himself. He entered the room hastily and with trepidation: — he looked pale — flurried — the tremor of his hand was discernible by the motion it imparted to a candlestick which he held — he looked wildly about him — seemed alarmed, and even disappointed, at finding his usual guests in their ordinary places in the drawing-room.

"My dear father," said Kate, "what on earth has happened?"

"Happened, child!" said Maxwell; "nothing has happened — what should happen?"

"Your looks, sir," continued his daughter ——

"Are not to be regarded," interrupted Maxwell.

"Have you seen the ghost of a patient, Mack?" said Moss. "What a lucky thing for the faculty it is, that dead men tell no tales."

"Give me some tea, Kate," said the surgeon, first putting down, and then putting out, the light; "I have a very bad head-ache."

"You had better go to bed," said Moss; "a snoose in the early part of the evening is a capital remedy."

"No," said Maxwell; "I have to visit a patient late to-night."

"To-night, sir?" said Apperton.

" Yes," said Maxwell, " it is a pressing case."

" Oh ! one of your life or death boys, I suppose," said Moss. " What can't the cretur keep his leg on, till the morning ?"

" It will save him much torture and much misery, if he can be relieved to-night," said the surgeon.

" Oh !" said Moss, " he 'll be relieved soon enough, no fear of that. Come, stockbroker, a pinch of your snuff."

" Have you ordered the carriage, sir ?" said Katherine.

" No, my dear child," said Maxwell, " I have had the horses out a great deal to-day — I can walk ; the night is fine, and the air will do me good. I am to meet another medical man at twelve."

" At twelve — what, midnight !" said Moss — " walk out at midnight ! — why your myrmidons will turn the tables upon you, murder you, and send you to your own shop to be cut up."

" No fear of that," said Maxwell ; " at least no fear that will hinder me from doing my duty to a fellow-creature."

" The weather has cleared up wonderfully since morning," said Apperton ; " the morning was so dreadfully wet that they had a difficulty in finishing the law upon that amiable gentleman, Mr. Hanningham."

A deep groan resounded through the room — every eye turned towards Maxwell — it was from his lips the sound had escaped. " I believe," said he, " that Hanningham was innocent, after all."

" Impossible, sir," said Apperton ; " the proofs were clear as light against him ; besides, I heard that he confessed the whole affair last night."

" That I doubt," said Maxwell, " and this I *know*, that those who are best acquainted with him and knew him most intimately, are even now assured that he was not guilty of the murder."

" That 's rather a late discovery," said Moss ; " the man 's hanged, and now they find out he is innocent. Some more tea, Kittums, dear."

" The glorious uncertainty of the law," said Apperton.

"Rather the inglorious certainty," said Moss, "as far as regards Mr. Hanningham."

"Are you going far, my dear father?" asked Katherine.

"Not very far, my dear child," replied Maxwell.

"And so late?"

"Yes," said the surgeon, "so late — it sounds quite mysterious, doesn't it?"

"I'll walk with you, sir," said the son-in-law elect.

"Or have a hackney coach, Maxwell," said Moss, "and then you can set me down. Are you going my way?"

"No," said Maxwell.

"Nor mine, sir?" said Apperton.

"No, I must go alone," said Maxwell.

"Oh! I see," whispered Moss to the stockbroker; "some delicate affair — secrecy — mum — a lady of quality in distress."

"Not so, Moss," answered his friend; "so far I can safely assure you: but our profession has a privilege which, I am sure, your good sense will not permit you to try to violate — we have a confidence reposed in us, and we should deserve to lose it, if we once could betray those who trust us."

At this moment, a sudden and violent noise, as of some heavy object falling, seemed to shake the house.

"Mercy on us!" said Katherine; "what is that?"

"What is it?" said Moss.

"Nothing — nothing," said Maxwell; "something has fallen down in the room above."

"It must be in *your* bed-room, sir," said Katherine — "I'll run up, and see what it is."

"Not for the world, Kate!" cried her father, springing on his feet; and rushing across the room, he seized the candle which the young lady was on the point of lighting, preparatory to starting upon her voyage of discovery. "No, no; give *me* the light — I can go, child — it is nothing — a book, or a chair, or, perhaps, the servants — here, here — I'll go myself and see what it is, since you all seem so mightily alarmed."

Saying which, the agitated master of the mansion, con-

cealing, as well as he could, the feelings which nearly overpowered him, quitted the apartment.

"Something's wrong with that cretur," said Moss. "Go up, Kittums, and see after him; I'm sure all is not as it should be."

"What can be the matter?" said his daughter.

"Oh, nothing is the matter," said Apperton. "Mr. Maxwell is always anxious and nervous when he has any difficult case on his mind, and gets fidgety and irritable."

"But where *can* he be going so late?" said Katherine, "so unusually late, and on foot?"

"Why he has told you that he won't tell you," said Moss, "and so there's no use worrying yourself about it; he is neither going my way, westward, nor Apperton's way, eastward; — now as he is rather too old and too steady to go northward, I conclude he is going southward. But it is getting late, and our staying here will not get us a bit nearer the secret, so let's have the cold meat, Kittums, and the pickles, and the punch. I have had nothing since dinner, except my tea, and that, as the French Count says, is but wishy-washy stuff, after all."

"Shall I go up to my father?" said Kate.

"Yes, if I were you, I would," said Apperton; "he may be unwell."

"Ring the bell, Mr. Moss," said she, "order the supper, and I will be back directly."

Saying which, she proceeded upstairs to her father's bedchamber, and hearing a deep groan proceeding from within, rushed into the apartment. As her eyes met the objects it contained, a faint scream escaped her,—in an instant her father seized her hand, and led her from the room. He closed the door after him — without speaking he drew his daughter towards her dressing-room — they entered it — she, trembling with alarm and apprehension, held by the sofa to sustain herself.

"Katherine," said Maxwell, "what induced you to burst into my room after I had told you that I would myself ascertain the cause of the noise we heard — was it curiosity?"

"No, no, my beloved father," said Miss Maxwell; "I

was prompted by anxiety for you: we saw you were agitated."

"Who saw that?" said Maxwell.

"All of us," said Katherine.

"What, while I was in the drawing-room?" asked Maxwell,

"Yes."

"Well, never mind," said Maxwell, "you did not suspect the cause?"

"What cause?" said Kate.

"In short, you have *no* suspicions — you *know* nothing — you have heard nothing?"

"No, my beloved father," said the agitated girl. "I followed you to your room, fearing that you were unwell — when I reached the door I heard a groan ——"

"It was not *I* who groaned," said Maxwell. "Tell me, — again I ask, — you *know* nothing?"

"No, no," said Kate, "I know nothing — I wish to hear nothing respecting the ——"

"Hush! not a word," said Maxwell, "hear a father's solemn injunction — the ruin of one individual, the life of another, depend upon your silence — your immutable silence as to what you have just seen, — you *know* nothing, — say nothing. The day may come when you will know all. Now, mark me, child; by your own precipitancy, founded, as I firmly believe, on affection for your father, you have brought this restriction upon yourself. Let us return to the drawing-room, — let us assume an air of composure; but let us get quit of our friends as early as possible — before midnight it *must* be."

"But really," said Katherine, "what have I seen to agitate you so deeply, — surely you are at liberty in your own house to ——"

"Not a word, not a syllable," again interrupted Maxwell. "Kate, dearest girl, you love me, fondly love me?"

"Need I answer such a question?" said Kate, hiding her weeping eyes on her father's shoulder.

"Show that love for me, then," said Maxwell, "by never alluding to the events of the last half hour, — not

only not to others, but never mention them to *me;* and never, never seek to gain an explanation of what you have witnessed,—promise me *that.*"

"Most solemnly I promise it," said Kate.

"The blessing of Heaven be upon you!" said her father: "come, come, come."

Saying which, he drew her arm under his, and taking up the light, descended with his beloved child to the drawing-room, where the servant was laying the cloth for the accustomed supper, and Godfrey Moss was poising some oysters, previously to inserting them between the bars of the grate, a process of roasting such fish, in which he was an adept, and of his dexterity in which the worthy gentleman was particularly proud.

CHAPTER IV.

She has charmed thee like a syren,
With looks of love, and with enchanting sounds;
Too late the rocks and quicksands will appear,
When thou art wrecked upon the faithless shore
By following her delusion. ROWE.

To the evening I have just described, or at least part of it, a night and morning of intense interest and anxiety to the house of Maxwell succeeded. Moss, having imbibed a sufficient quantity of the "ginnums and water," as he called it, produced his cigar and lighted it, and betook himself to his hotel. Apperton (having taken a private leave of his betrothed in the back drawing-room, where he went to look for something which he had not left there, and into which she followed him, to assist in a pursuit which she knew went for nothing,) bent his way to the city; and Maxwell having seen his daughter safely to her chamber, desired the servants to retire to rest, as he was obliged to go out late, and would take one of those portable keys which *bon vivants,* and occasionally the profes-

sional members of middling life, find to be most admirable inventions for superseding the sitting-up of domestics.

After, therefore, the household of the surgeon had departed to their repose, and just as he imagined them wrapt in slumbers sweet and sound, the head of the family went forth into the wide world on the mission to which he had only slightly referred; but, whether it was of the delicate nature that Moss anticipated, or of the critical character which Apperton apprehended, it was not destined that his own establishment should know. His son was out of town on a visit to the family of his intended, Miss Epsworth, accompanied by Major Overall, so that Katherine was left alone to ruminate upon what she had seen, and on what she could scarcely fail to believe the consequent nocturnal ramble of her esteemed father; and when, at nine o'clock the following morning, Kate discovered that he had not returned, her anxiety and distress may be better conceived than described.

Ten thousand fearful apprehensions filled her mind: Maxwell's agitation on the previous evening; his ardent desire to evade the enquiries, and get rid of the society of his intimate friends; his positive injunctions as to silence, added to his unprecedented absence from home without her knowledge of his destination, excited the greatest alarm in her anxious breast; and when Moss made his appearance at the breakfast-table, his observations upon the affair tended in no degree whatever to calm her agitation, or soothe her apprehensions.

Another hour elapsed, and still no Maxwell.

"What can have happened?" said Moss; "didn't he tell you *any thing*, Kittums?"

"Not of the nature of his excursion," said Kate.

"Did he go out after you were all gone to bed?"

Kate answered in the affirmative.

"Ten to one, then, some mischief has occurred," said Moss. "Do the servants know nothing?—did nobody sit up for him?"

"No," said Kate, "he desired they might not—that he would let himself into the house on his return."

"Something's wrong, Kitty, I fear," said Moss, looking wistfully at the breakfast-table.

"My dear Mr. Moss, don't terrify me to death," said Kate; "what *can* have happened?"

"Impossible to say," sighed Moss; "but it is very extraordinary so regular a person — habits like clockwork — unless a poor patient, and a difficult case, and then he'd stay for a fortnight if he were wanted,— perhaps it is *that*, — at all events, Kittums, let's have breakfast, he will have breakfasted before this, wherever he is, and there's no use in waiting any longer."

Saying which, Godfrey used his acknowledged privilege, and rang the bell. Kate's anxiety hardly permitted her to know what was going on, and every moment she was running to the window — every sound of a footstep, or the stopping of a carriage, excited her interest, and attracted her attention.

"But, Kate, what did he say to *you*, when you went up stairs to him last, and when he seemed so flurried?" said Moss.

"Ah!" said Kate, "that's the point which worries me most."

"Did he seem vexed, or angry?" asked Moss.

"No," said Kate. "He made me promise not to mention a word of that interview; but if by my silence I am keeping him in some situation of peril — yet — what good *could* I do, even if I told all!"

"All what, Kittums?" said Moss, who had begun to prepare his first meal for the day, with a carefulness and precision indicative of a secondary feeling for his friend's safety — "there *is* a story, then, is there? — this toast isn't half brown enough — eh, Kittums?"

"There certainly *is*," said Miss Maxwell; "but how that can be connected with my father's prolonged absence, or how the circumstance, of which I am aware, could have caused this delay in his return, I know not."

"Tell me what it is," said Moss; "the butter, Kittums — what is it?"

"I dare not," said Kate; "I have promised my father to keep secret what I saw, and ——"

"But if he is suffering in consequence," said Moss, "that's a pretty joke — this egg is hardly done enough — eh?"

"How can he be suffering in consequence?" said Kate.

"How can I tell," said Moss, "unless you tell me what you saw — concealment is all trash — nonsense — you promised not to tell, because your father desired you to do so; now you think telling may be of use to *him*, and of course you tell."

"If I could be sure that my telling what I saw," said Kate, "could conduce to his speedy return, or even his safety abroad, you may be sure I would run the risk of disobeying *him*, for the sake of ensuring your advice in this emergency."

"Well, tell me, and let me judge," said Moss.

"I know not what to do," said Kate, her fears for her father's safety, and her anxiety for his preservation, acting vaguely and confusedly upon the force of the moral obligation to secrecy, into which she had entered the night before — "I think I *will* tell *you*," said she, "it will be best — you can then judge what we ought to do — I went up stairs to my father last night ——"

"Well, that I know," said Moss; "a little bit more sugar, Kittums, and a drop more cream — yes — you went up stairs to your father ——"

"And when I entered my father's room — somewhat abruptly, I beheld — Oh! there he is! there he is!" exclaimed she, recognising his accustomed knock at the street door; "thank God, he is safe and well." Saying which she rushed into the hall, and was in her father's arms in a moment, leaving Moss, with his mouth full, and his ears open, as uninformed as Curtis, when Grumio cut him short of the many things of worthy memory which were doomed to die in oblivion, and he return unexperienced to his grave.

"Why, Mack — where have you been, old boy?" exclaimed Moss, as the surgeon entered the breakfast parlour.

"On business," said Maxwell; "you may rely upon it, for pleasure I should not willingly have staid so long from home."

" Ah, but we did not know you did stay willingly, " said Moss. " Have you breakfasted?"

" No," said Maxwell.

" Then we must have up heaps more eatables, Kittums," said Moss. " I have finished the toast, and the butter, and the eggs. Well, and what have you been doing — putting some poor cretur out of his misery?"

" I hope so," said Maxwell.

" And what was you doing up stairs last night, when Kittums bounced in upon you?" said Moss.

In an instant Maxwell's countenance lost its placidity; his eyes glanced hastily and angrily on his daughter.

" Kate," said he, " have you told Moss what I bid you never mention?"

" Not she, Mack," said Moss; " but I'll be hanged if she would not, if you hadn't knocked at the door just as you did. If you had doddled him open with your little key, I should have had the whole story out before you had got in; but you were too much of a gentleman, I suppose, to let yourself in by daylight."

" In my anxiety," said Kate, " to account for your absence, I think I should have been induced to violate my promise to *you*, sir, in order to have consulted the Doctor as to what was best to be done; but ——"

" Should have violated," said Maxwell, " did you violate it, Kate?"

" No, father," said Kate.

" That's a good girl," said Maxwell, resuming his former air of mildness and kindness; " not that there is any thing to tell, that every body in the world might not know; but as you promised me, I should have been vexed, and even angry, if you had broken that promise."

" Psha — trash — gammon," said Moss, " nobody wants to know your secrets — some back-stairs warming-pan plot, I suppose — some blot to be covered — some scrape to be hid; — come, give me another cup of tea, I don't care a fig where you have been. I'm deuced glad you are come back safe and sound; for one can't get a bit of breakfast in comfort, when the tea makers are fidgety."

" Come," said Kate, " you do yourself an injustice, as

you always do, in denying your own good feelings: you only pretended to care for your breakfast to divert my anxiety, and make light, apparently, of what I know worried you."

"No such thing, miss," said Moss; "I am like the Jolly Miller they sing about in the play, who lived on the river Dee, 'I care for nobody, nobody cares for me.'"

"There, Moss," said Maxwell, "you do *us* as great a piece of injustice as you did yourself before. However, I shall go up to my room and lie down for an hour or two, for I am really tired."

"What, have you been up all night?" said Moss.

"Yes," said Maxwell, who seemed agitated and disturbed, even by the slightest reference to the events of the last twelve hours.

"Have you been far?" said Moss.

"A few miles."

"On foot?"

"Not exactly."

"Your boots are as muddy as if you had walked half over Lincolnshire," said Moss.

"Crossing the streets," replied the surgeon.

"What, clay in the streets?" said Moss.

"Never mind, Moss," said Maxwell. "I repeat what I have often said to you before — members of our profession are privileged; we are not expected to tell all we know."

"True," said Moss; "and it appears as if your family considered your privilege like that of the peerage — hereditary, — for Kitty herself is as close as an oyster."

"And will remain so; of that I am quite sure," said Maxwell, "after her promise to me. Good morning, good folks, at luncheon we shall meet. Ned will be home, by dinner time, from the country: Apperton will, of course, dine here; and I have asked two or three people to join us to make up a rubber."

"What, you don't repeat your nocturnal visit?" said Moss.

"Mousetrap! Mousetrap!" said Maxwell, "how often am I to tell you not to be inquisitive?"

"Now there goes that cretur," said Moss, as Maxwell left the room, "to get an hour or two's uncomfortable rest, after a sleepless night; devoted to some sick devil, puttering about in the mud and dirt, nobody knows where, all for a pound or two, when he has got already more than he knows what to do with."

"I don't think my dear father so very mercenary either," said Kate.

"Mercenary!" cried the Doctor, "every body is mercenary; look into every thing — every pursuit in which men are engaged, and from the chimney-sweeper to the cabinet minister, you'll find six-and-eight-pence at the bottom of all their doings. I have said this all along, and one of the scribbling creturs who knows me, put it into one of his books, and called me a cynic into the bargain."

"And I," said Kate ——

"Called me a Mousetrap, Kittums," interrupted Moss; "but then you were a little toddling thing; and then I was fond of babies, and — I don't like 'em now, they make me sick, and spoil conversation, and — but I forgot — I suppose you'll soon have some on 'em to pester me with. I hope to God they'll take after their mother."

This pointed allusion to Kate's approaching nuptials, and the unequivocal expression of dislike towards her intended husband which it conveyed, drove the blushing bride elect out of the breakfast parlour; leaving Mousetrap to spell the Morning Post, and read, as he did most sedulously, the hebdomadary which that popular paper presents on the Monday of each succeeding week, and by which a man, at a glance, can perceive the very day and hour at which the moon is in perigee; when the nightingale begins to sing; when the cuckoo proclaims the coming flowers; when Oxford and Cambridge terms commence; when snakes appear, and Joshua died. In the complicated lore of this useful compendium, Mousetrap was erudite beyond measure, and to the enjoyment of his study, that way tending, we will leave him until the arrival of evening, and of the heir of the house of Maxwell, had re-assembled the whole of the family party in Burlington Gardens.

Exercise, when recommended medicinally to a fat man — olives to a young beginner — truffles to a novice — an aquatic excursion to belles from the inland counties, are nothing compared with the feelings produceable by a continued effort to fancy one's self in love with some particular young lady, a marriage with whom, our friends and connections have decided upon for us, and whose fortune and station in society would be so particularly advantageous; and it may safely be relied upon, that a positive antipathy may sooner be conquered, than a passion fanned up, out of such feelings as those which young Maxwell entertained for Miss Epsworth.

I would not describe Miss Epsworth for the world; for having proclaimed her plain in person, and uneven in temper, if I descended to particulars, some of my suspicious female readers would not fail to put her cap upon their heads, and think it fitted uncommonly well. Suffice it to say, she was cold in manner, and unwholesome to look at — coarse in her tastes, and fine in her dress — her costume was regulated by the absurdities which appear every month in the magazines as records of fashions, being such things as never are worn, or ever could be seen any where out of Bedlam; — add to all her other defects, wayward pride and flippant conceit, founded upon her wealth (the old six-and-eight-penny basis of our friend Mousetrap), and an openness to flattery so marvellous, and a credulity upon the point of her own attractions so incomprehensible, that even those who sought to win her were fearful of alarming her suspicions, while they scarcely satisfied her expectations; put all these amiable qualities together, and we have something like a portrait of the intended wife of Mr. Maxwell, junior.

But certainly, if at any period of their acquaintance the young gentleman had felt a distaste for the young lady, it was, at the period to which we now refer, most considerably improved; not only by the events of the last few days during his *séjour* in the country, but by the occurrences of the last few hours in London; for it appeared that Ned (whether from the effect of contrast, or from the integral beauties of the new object, it was difficult to determine,)

had, since his arrival in town, lost at a *coup de main* the stubborn heart which had so long resisted the advances of the wealthy Jane.

"Well, Master Ned," said Moss, beginning his attack the moment the family party were ranged at dinner, "what did you do down at Dullham House — hard work to get through the day — eh?"

"No," said Ned; "I didn't find it very bad — after breakfast we did as we liked till half past one."

"Ah! that is, did nothing," said Moss; — "went and washed a dog in a pond; looked at a hen's nest; saw half a dozen horses' tails sticking out of their stalls in the stables; squashed about the brown sugar walks in the dripping shrubberies; sat on the bridge; looked at the water; saw how sticks swim; admired a calf; proposed sparrow shooting; no gun at hand; thought of a walk in the kitchen-garden — gate locked; wanted to look at the grapery — gardener gone to buy pea sticks. I know — well, poor deluded creturs, and what after *that?*"

"Why, after *that*," said Ned "(if you mean after what never occurred), came luncheon; after luncheon our horses and the carriages were ordered — Miss Epsworth and her aunt used to drive in the phaeton, and I and Overall, and one or two others, used to ride."

"What have you done with the major?" said Maxwell.

"He is there, sir," said Edward.

"What, at Dulham?"

"Yes," said Ned.

"To be sure he is," said Moss.

"I think," said Apperton, "he has an eye to the free hold, and the copyhold, and the leasehold; the India stock, and the three per cent. consols."

"As sure as a gun," said Moss, "that lying little cretur will snap up your Jenny, Master Ned; he'll carry off your little rickety vinegar bottle, if you don't look sharp."

"I cannot help it," said Edward; "and if he do, I don't much care."

"What!" exclaimed Kate, "a lover, and speak so of your beloved?"

"I am no lover, Kate," replied her brother; "at least not of hers."

"Hallo!" said his father; "what, is your heart going another way?"

"Going, sir?" said Edward.

"Gone, I think," said Kitty.

"That is nonsense," said Edward; "but I honestly confess I never *did* see such a lovely creature in the whole course of my existence as one I saw to-day, and whose life I saved."

"Oh! a romantic affair," said Moss. "Where did 'um happen, Master Neddums?"

"In — Long Acre," said Edward, after a little hesitation.

"What a scene for a romance!" said Kate.

"Was she very pretty, Ned?" asked his father: — "tell us your story."

"Why sir," said the son, "at the corner of Long Acre, a carriage driving furiously along, and, unseen by her, was within an inch of running over this beautiful girl. I, luckily, and most luckily, as I hadn't been in town half an hour, and was coming homewards from Lincoln's Inn, rushed between *her* and the horses, seized the bridle of the off horse with one hand, and catching the lovely creature round the waist with the other, succeeded in rescuing her from what must otherwise have been certain death."

"And a very meritorious act, too, Ned," said Maxwell. "No accident *did* happen to her, I hope?"

"No job for the craft," said Moss; "no feeling for the faculty — eh? — six-and-eight-pence again, Kittums."

"No, sir," said Edward, "she was, as they say, more frightened than hurt; but she was all gratitude to me, — and called me her deliverer."

"Mistook you for your father, perhaps, Neddums," said Moss.

"She gave you her address — a reference, I conclude," said Apperton.

"No," said Edward, and sighed.

"He's a young chap yet," said Moss, *sotto voce* to the stockbroker: "does she live in Drury Lane, Ned?"

"Where she lives, I know not," said the young man. "I begged leave to see her home, but she strenuously declined; I enquired her residence — she would not tell me — she requested me to call a hackney-coach — I did so — handed her in ——"

"And left her in the straw without further enquiry?" asked Moss.

"I *did* enquire again and again," said young Maxwell, "but to no purpose. She thanked me a thousand times: but entreated me, in accepting those thanks, to add to her obligations, by not endeavouring to discover whither she went; and I ——"

"Of course got up behind the coach and traced her," said Moss.

"No, Mr. Moss," said Edward, "I did not. I gave her my honour I would conform myself to her wishes; she told me her reasons were important, and imperious — I believed her assertions, and obeyed her injunctions."

"And you behaved like a gentleman and a man of honour, Ned," said his father; "but was she very handsome?"

"Lovely, perfectly lovely," said Edward.

"I thought," said Kate, "that you did not prefer such lovely persons, Edward?"

"Perhaps, Kate," said Ned, "I should rather call it loveable. I have no taste for your regular, systematic, Grecian-nosed, short-lipped, classical one, two, three regulation beauties, as you know; but this creature had eyes full of intelligence and feeling, and a mouth which, when she smiled ——"

"Oh! stuff, Ned!" said Moss; "here, stockbroker, give me some snuff. I used to talk that sort of trash myself when I was at your time of life, but ——"

"Nay," said Maxwell, "when you did talk it, I have no doubt you thought it very agreeable."

"What added to the interest this charming girl inspired," said Ned, "was her dress."

"Cocquelot, hat and hair to match?" said Moss.

"No," said Edward, "she was dressed in the deepest mourning."

"Black saves washing," said Mr. Apperton.

"She had that within which passeth show," said Edward, "there was a plaintive melancholy in her eye——"

"Oh, Ned, Ned," said Moss, "if you go on so, I must have up the gin and water an hour earlier than usual."

"It is very curious," said the stockbroker, "to observe how the most sensible characters are imposed upon. There was myself——"

"What, by way of an example," said Moss, taking a huge pinch of Apperton's snuff.

"Yes, *exempli gratia*——"

"As the Dutch say," continued Mousetrap.

"Come, come, Mousetrap," said Maxwell, "let Apperton tell his story, and then we will have some loo — and Kitty shall say to you and Pam together, Pray be civil."

"Oh, civil," said Moss, "I'm civil enough; but I've no patience with all this pottering about runaway horses and runover women — pish! — the creturs put themselves there on purpose to be run over, or run away with. Come, Kittums — put away your netting — making a purse for the stockbroker boy, — eh?"

"I was making it for *you*," said Kate.

"Not a bit of it," said Moss — "I hav'n't no need of purses — no — no — Apperton's the boy — those high-stool chaps, with the desks, and the rails, and the stove, and the slits in the panels for the bills, eh, Apperton? that's the way we does 'em in Copthall Court, or wherever your Potamaboo place is. Come along, then, let's see you play your loo."

"What, will you play?" said Maxwell.

"Not I," said Moss: "I can't understand that stationary work; but as we ar'n't to have any music, let's see you do the Great Mogul foolery."

And accordingly they sat down to what some of the party considered a relaxation from severer occupation; what others felt to be a simply hazardous investment of money on a small scale; what some endeavoured to find oblivion to their thoughts in the pursuit of; and what two juvenile appendages to the circle, in the shape of pale-faced pupils, considered as extremely amusing, rather improper, and very

exciting, seeing that they played five-card loo, with fish at two shillings per dozen.

Neither the intricacy, nor the importance, nor the interest of the game, however, could recall the thoughts, or attract the attention of Edward Maxwell from the all absorbing object of his present contemplation. He had, indeed, seen a lovely creature, lovely in all personal attractions, and still more beautiful and pure in her mind. He had saved her life — her heart overflowed with gratitude for the courage and readiness which he had displayed in her rescue. Young Maxwell's person, (and sad is the certainty to gentlemen of plain appearance, and ungainly figure, to know that personal attractions *have* their influence, especially on first acquaintance,) — young Maxwell's person was extremely good, his countenance was intelligent and animated, and constantly affected by the workings of his mind. This, in addition to his unaffected, gentlemanlike manners, and the genuine ardour with which he first preserved the beautiful girl from destruction, and then followed up his activity in her rescue, by his solicitude for her tranquillity, and his assurances of obedience to her almost unreasonable refusal to give him any information of her name or residence, had, I have reason to know — how, it is impossible to tell — produced their due effect upon the heart of the mourning fair one.

Edward, however, pledged, as he felt himself, not to pursue the bright vision which had flashed across him and so quickly faded away, held, that her injunctions only went to prevent his following her upon *that* occasion, and certainly could not refer to any future experiments which he might be inclined to make, in the way of falling in with her *accidentally.* The fact of her being alone, and in no very aristocratic part of the town, unattended by a servant, proved that, in point of rank or fortune, *she* stood not much above himself; and the circumstance of her perambulating the streets one day in the week, so unattended, led him to the conclusion, that she might be caught wandering in a similar manner some other day. The best chance he seemed to have, would be to hover about the neighbourhood in which he had first encountered her; and although the crossing

from Drury Lane to Long Acre seems, as Miss Maxwell said, a somewhat unromantic haunt for the thoughts or the person of a sighing lover, still the breakfast of the following morning had scarcely disappeared, before the gentle Adonis, rejecting the retirement of Diveandpore's sunken study, might have been seen oscillating between the pastry-cook's in Queen Street and the clothes' shop opposite.

There he wandered like a troubled spirit — gazing in all directions — lingering and looking; sometimes varying the dulness of his occupation by reading the declarations of the efficacy of Mr. Basil Burchell's wonderful Anodyne Necklaces, and examining the well-preserved results of Dr. Gardener's incomparable vermifuge, sadly divided between love and lassitude: until after a delay long past what he imagined might be the accustomed hour of his divinity's visit to those parts, he sauntered, with the sun in his eyes, towards the western quarter of London, still looking in every direction for the wished-for object of his speculation.

But, alas! his hopes were vain, his pursuits fruitless! and when he returned to dress for dinner, jaded, tired, and vexed, he began to feel more seriously than ever, the violence of the passion with which the bright eyes of his incognita had inspired his young heart.

To the sedate, the serious, and the more advanced reader, this painful result of a momentary glance may appear somewhat overstrained. But no; at Edward's time of life the effect was natural, the wound began to rankle, and to the first glow of fancy succeeded an aching desire again to behold the fair creature whose features were constantly before his eyes. Restlessness and vexation, even to tears, at his loss; self-reproach at the thoughtlessness which could have permitted her so entirely to escape him; and a something too like regret at the punctiliousness of his own honour, which had induced him to observe his promise with a strictness she herself might despise him for, all combined to worry, agitate, and torment the love-sick youth.

His passion had, in four-and-twenty hours, effected a complete revolution in his mind. His once loved home became irksome to him; he could not endure meeting his own family at dinner; the placid happiness of his sister

and her lover distressed him; and as for Moss, he hated him and his satirical jokes with all the fervour of his heart; — in short, nothing could soothe, nothing could amuse, nothing could interest him, and he resolved to dine alone at some distant coffee-house, and endeavour to divert his thoughts by varying the scene, while he still pursued the object of his hopes and wishes by perambulating in various directions the vast metropolis and its environs. The success attendant upon this determination remains to be developed.

CHAPTER V.

She doth stray about by holy crosses. SHAKSPEARE.

THE lectures were fast proceeding, but Edward still remained unsatisfied as to his transient beauty. He must, however, for a moment, be left playing bo-peep with his Long Acre Hebe, while the reader's attention is attracted to the measures in progress with respect to the marriage of the stockbroker and Katherine Maxwell.

The affair was now no longer a secret, no more was it mentioned in whispers, no more referred to in innuendoes, or hinted at in half-murmured sentences. Milliners and mantua-makers had been called into council, bride's maids had been nominated, their several and various merits discussed, and their eligibility canvassed. Nay, Apperton himself had gone the length of visiting the King Street Bazar to select a second-hand carriage (number 348), yellow body, drab lining (a little soiled), with scarlet wheels, picked out black, wherein to carry off the idol of his soul, after the auspicious ceremony had been performed, which was to confer upon him the mastery of her hand, and — her fifteen thousand pounds, three per cent. consols.

Moss had a brother who partook considerably of the family failing — a strong affection for grog and cigars; and who was rector of Fudley-cum-Pipes, in the county

of Lincolnshire, an orthodox divine in his way, but more addicted to boosery, than he, perhaps, would have been in a less humid county than that which it was his fortune to inhabit. To *him* was to be intrusted the agreeable duty of uniting the philosophical lovers, or, as Apperton called it, "establishing the firm;" and to *him* even already had the writ of summons been issued; so that things were actually in extremities, and all the interested parties on the very tiptoe of expectation.

It had been at one time proposed that Edward's marriage with Miss Epsworth should take place on the same day with that of his sister. But however indifferent the elder couple might appear as to the consummation of all their earthly hopes and wishes, the youngest lover of the party seemed not only indifferent as to the time *when* he was to call the wealthy girl his own, but, since the appearance of the sable vision in Drury Lane, almost positively opposed to the conclusion of the match at any period whatever; but as it turned out in the sequel, he was not doomed to languish for ever in despair on the subject of his beautiful *incognita*.

After a ten days' patrolling of London, just as he was crossing Piccadilly from the end of Half-Moon Street to the Green-Park Gate, his eye suddenly fell on the long desired, long looked-for object. The lady at the same moment saw, and evidently recognised, her anxious admirer, and instantly huddling down her veil, passed into the Park, and greatly increased her rate of walking; but Edward borrowed the wings of Love, and in a few seconds was at her side.

"Have I found you at last?" said he: "this meeting repays me for all the anxiety I have suffered since we parted, and the unceasing search I have made to behold you again."

"It would be affectation in me," said the young lady, hesitatingly, and in broken accents, "to deny the recollection of my deliverer from danger; but the same motives which induced me to trust to your honour the last time I saw you, not to endeavour to trace my residence, compel me now to entreat you to leave me immediately."

"I have once sinned by obeying you," said Edward: "you were then suffering under agitation of mind and great alarm, and I myself was considerably flurried by the circumstances of your accident and escape. I *then* certainly made a promise, and I have kept it — but I made it only for that once."

"And how you have kept it," said the stranger, "I do not exactly understand, since you have just said that I have been the object of your unremitted search ever since."

"I confess," said Maxwell, "that I have never until this moment ceased repenting of my rash promise; and it is not very likely that I should again commit an error, which has already caused me so much pain and annoyance."

"I am sure, sir," said the lovely girl, raising from the ground a pair of eyes full of expression and anxiety,—"I am quite sure, you would not wish to make me eternally miserable; and I will be candid enough to tell you, that your success in discovering my name and residence would be nothing short of destruction to me.'

"What?" said Edward, "a cruel, tyrannical mother or a savage maiden aunt? a vindictive father, or a persecuting brother?"

"I have no such relations," said the stranger; "I never knew my mother; I *have* a brother, indeed, but he is far, far away."

"Then in what way can my knowledge of your name and residence so seriously involve your peace or comfort?" asked Edward.

"Why, really," replied the young lady, smiling, "one is not in the habit of making confidences upon such very short acquaintance, nor am I accustomed to favour perfect strangers with my history at sight."

"I do not consider myself a perfect stranger," said Maxwell, rather piqued; "I flattered myself that I had some little claim to your friendship, and ——"

"Indeed you have," interrupted his companion. "I was wrong; I spoke flippantly — foolishly. I am grateful, most grateful to you; but it is impossible, utterly impossible, to permit our acquaintance to continue; indeed, I must entreat you to quit me at this very moment — here

Edward waited their return with considerable patience, but nobody appeared. He then walked up the yard—saw nobody like either his male *friend*, or his female acquaintance—looked into the different coach offices—not there; peered into the windows of a tap-room, pryed into the Times Brighton coach, just on the point of starting, and then returned towards the gateway.

"Are you looking for any body, sir?" said one of those nondescript idlers who are always lingering about such places.

"Yes," said Edward; "I am looking for the man I was speaking to just now."

"Oh! he's gone out through the gate into St. Martin's Lane," said the man.

"Who is he?" asked Edward, thinking to get a clue.*

"He's one of the traps as belongs to Union Hall."

"A what?" said Edward.

"He's a hofficer," said the man.*

Edward was more puzzled than before: it seemed certainly as if the lady with whom he was walking had recognised this fellow as an acquaintance, or else it would appear that she had put herself under his protection to secure herself from the advances of her pursuer; but then it seemed such an extraordinary piece of cunning to bring her in at one gate of the inn, and let her out at another. He was convinced that his charmer must be in the house—that she was anxious, as she had said she was, to avoid him, and had engaged this minion of the law to aid her escape from *him*. It was quite evident she must be some beautiful creature from the country, ill used by her family, and living, for the present, at the Golden Cross, Charing Cross.

Edward having got this clue determined to follow it up. He was now convinced that he had housed his fair one; accordingly he proceeded into the coffee-room, and order-

* The rapidity with which the improvements of the part of London here referred to have gone on since the publication of this novel has been such, as to render this description of the locality unintelligible. In 1830 the "Golden Cross" stood at Charing Cross, having an entrance also from St. Martin's Lane. Not a vestige of either the inn or the lane in which it stood now remains.—1833.

ing some hot nastiness, which, in such places, is called soup, he began to make a sort of acquaintance with a very respectable looking waiter, upon whose prudence and sagacity he thought he could rely; and having paid for his mess, and made a donation to the waiter of more than double its value, he, in a half whisper, enquired whether there was a lady staying in the house, who wore deep mourning — whether she was living there alone, or had a father, or mother, or brother, or uncle, or aunt with her.

The question succeeded to a miracle — there *was* a lady in mourning — she *had* been out walking — had just before returned — she came from the country, and her name was Scrimshaw.

"How long has she been here?" said Edward.

"About a fortnight, or rather better, perhaps," said the waiter: "she generally goes out to walk in the forenoon, in the Park, I think, and then she comes in and has a mutton chop or two, and some pickles and porter, for luncheon, and then lies down till dinner time; but she has no living creature here with her: she pays her bill every Saturday; and in that case, you see, sir, we make it a point never to ask any superfluous questions."

Scrimshaw—porter—pickles—sleeps till dinner. "Umph! thank you," said Edward; "I was very curious to know who she was."

"Why, sir, so are we," said the waiter. "She 's uncommon good natured to all the servants: she did bring a sort of maid of her own, but she has discharged her; and what she tells my missis is, that she is a waiting here for some gentleman as she expects somewhere out of the country."

"Enough — get me a bottle of soda water," said Edward, resolved to make this order the medium for an increased largess to the waiter.

The command was obeyed, the soda water swallowed, the waiter remunerated, and Edward again in the street in five minutes.

It is difficult to describe the satisfaction of the ardent and anxious young man at having discovered, by his own excess of prudence, the retreat of the fair *incognita*; al-

though it must be confessed there were some drawbacks to the pleasure he derived from the knowledge he had acquired. In the first place, there was something strange in a beautiful girl living alone at a London inn, without servants; something more strange in her having dismissed the only attendant she had; something very odd in her living two or three weeks alone and unattended; and something more odd yet, in her familiar association with a police officer. The episodaical account of the mutton chops and porter for luncheon rather spoiled the sentimentality of the affair: but *then*, perhaps, she was consumptive, and had been recommended, upon the new system, to eat mutton chops and drink porter; and besides, luncheon was the principal meal of ladies; and besides, perhaps every lady ate mutton chops and drank porter for luncheon, but nobody knew it, because they did not feed under the inspection of bribeable waiters.

His plan, however, was very speedily resolved upon: whatever objections she might have to being seen in his company in public, or whatever delicacy she might feel with regard to disclosures respecting her family, in conversation, a letter addressed to her might gain her confidence, and she might be induced, in writing, to disclose circumstances of which her innate delicacy would forbid her to speak.

The minutes seemed hours until the anxious young man was seated in his study, with the materials for writing before him. His eye "in a fine frenzy rolling," and every thing actually in progress for opening the correspondence, with a flushed cheek, and a trembling hand, he wrote as follows:—

"*Tuesday.*

"That I have discovered your retreat, after all the precautions you adopted, may prove to you, at least, that I am not easily baffled, nor inclined to give up one upon whose attention circumstances have conspired to give me, at least, a fair claim. You, no doubt, thought by your manœuvres with your friend the officer—you see I know every thing—to evade my vigilance; but you have failed, and I do not hesitate to throw myself upon your good

feelings—upon your justice—if I may not claim any warmer sentiment, to ask you whether I deserve the conduct you have thought proper to adopt, or whether I should not be the meanest of God's creatures to surrender, after what has occurred, one to whom I honestly and candidly admit myself to have been devoted ever since I first became acquainted with her.

"Young as I am, I think I know enough of the world not to build my hopes of happiness upon so sandy a foundation as mere personal appearance. The attractions of beauty alone would have failed to hold me, did I not know that in her I so ardently admire, there exists a more permanent power over my feelings and affection, than the mere external advantages of person could ever possess. It is true, my acquaintance with you is not of a nature to warrant this sort of address; but in what manner else can I endeavour to avert a blow which will destroy my future comfort? How else check you in a course of proceeding which you seem resolved to adopt? How else assert my claim to a heart, which, if I know myself, I have deserved to possess?

"As candour is, in *my* mind, a virtue of the first quality, I shall not hesitate at once to avow myself; feeling assured, when you revolve all the circumstances of the case, you will not hesitate to do me justice. Had I a desire to entrap you into any disclosures, which it might be disagreeable to you to make, I might pursue a different course—follow your steps—watch your proceedings—and at last come forward in a much more questionable shape; but I seek to take no advantage of you. By whatever circumstances you may have been induced to act towards me as you have done, I do not impeach your motives. Your acquaintance with me is not, perhaps, such as to have interested you in my behalf; still, I repeat, I am resolved to be candid—to announce to you, in my proper person and character, the knowledge I have gained of your residence in town, and my determination, by every fair and honourable means in my power, to attain the object of my hopes and wishes, upon a point the most important in human life.

"If you are surprised at the absence of passion in this appeal, you should recollect, that the more deeply rooted feeling is, the less effect it produces externally—shallow brooks ripple loudly over the pebbles, but the deep stream runs silently. Let me entreat you, then, write to me, one line expressive of your determination—appoint some spot to meet me, if you consider your inn an inconvenient place; or, if you think I may there encounter the friend *whom you expect from the country*—you see I know all—ay, ever since your arrival, even up to the dismissal of your attendant—so disguise with me is useless. Again I entreat you to consider my feelings, and the suspense in which I must remain till I hear from you; and believe me yours,

"EDWARD MAXWELL.

"——— Street,
"Burlington Gardens."

Edward read and re-read this epistle, which did not at all satisfy him as to the warmth of its expression; but he reasoned upon its apparent coolness thus:—if the young lady were inclined to favour his suit, the modesty and candour of his avowal were quite sufficient to extract a confession: while if, on the other hand, she chose to repel him roughly, and perhaps exhibit his effusion to her expected friend from the country, it would be wise not to add a new folio to that school of amatory literature, specimens of which are occasionally brought before the public, in the course of those unreadable trials to which the eyes of the world are constantly directed in the public newspapers.

In less than ten minutes, Edward's servant was despatched to the Golden Cross; and before dinner was announced, the ardent lover had the satisfaction to know, that his appeal was safely lodged in the hands of the gentle Scrimshaw, a name which, being the only objectionable quality of the lady, as far as he yet knew, he felt particularly anxious to change as soon as possible.

To the family circle at Maxwell's, the only addition was the clerical brother of the humorist Moss, who had arrived in the metropolis, preparatory to the performance of the sacred duty of uniting the lovers. It was in vain for Edward to attempt to conceal from Kitty his success with

respect to Miss Scrimshaw; and, by degrees, before the evening was half over, his secret was all told to his sister, under a strict promise not to divulge the particulars; a promise which she, who, to say truth, had never entertained any very great regard for the wealthy Miss Epsworth, intended most religiously to keep. However, between nine and ten o'clock a letter was delivered to Edward, luckily just at a period when his excellent parent was most attentively carrying on his rubber of whist; so that the trepidation and confusion which the arrival of that which the anxious youth truly anticipated was a communication from his fair correspondent were not perceived by that exemplary personage. It was in vain to attempt to open or read an answer so important, and so fraught with interest, as this must unquestionably be, in the society of others. He, therefore, hastily jumped up, and, lighting a chamber candle, (the family lights being always arranged on a small table, just within the front drawing-room,) flew up stairs to his dressing-room, where, with devouring eyes, he read what follows: —

" Sir,

" I am quite sewer you well exquese me for wot has hapened, wen I explain my forloun sityation — nothink helse wood hav enduced me to hackt as I haf dun, for what you say about the clam upon a hart which ort by wrights to be your hone, is as true as Jospell; but one is not hallways uns own missuss, so that is the playing truth on it.

" Your noshuns of booty has ad nothink to do with the rites of it, and if the hofficer you spekes of had not a greater hole of me than mear pursewashun, I shod not haf thote of cumming here. The minuet I seed your name I thout I shoed hav dyde, because such honorable conduk I do not think I desarve, howsomever you nose best, althow how you got sent of my cumming into thes house I dont now, for I tuck every pawsable preckaution not to be diskevered while I was weighting in toone for one wich, it brakes my hart to now is your rifle.

" I trust you will due nothun desprut, and I will hopen my art to you, for I am by natur candied, and will explayn

how it hapened that I was engagged at hall; meanwile, if you please to say at wot our I may kall at your farthers ouse or elsewere, I will kontrive so has to kip my apointmeant let kum wot wil, for I never has repinted but once wot I haf ondertakein, so in hops to ear from you in coarse two morrow,

"I rest yewers,

"Humbelly,

"MARTHA SCRIMSHAW."

"*Mr. Edward Maxwell, Esq.*"

The charms of magic are said to be dissolved, if a word is spoken; certain it is, that the charms of Miss Patty Scrimshaw were most surprisingly dissipated by the words she had witten. Edward re-read the strange letter — threw it down — then took it up again — and at last burst into an immoderate fit of laughter; not that he held fine writing to be an essential in matters of love; but, in the sort of connection he had proposed to the beautiful girl, certainly something more like general accomplishment was, if not absolutely necessary, at least extremely desirable.

The thing, indeed, struck him to be so absurd, and so nearly impossible into the bargain, that he would not have hesitated a moment in deciding, that there had been some mistake in the delivery of his letter; but that his fair correspondent referred, point by point, to his appeal to her, and recalled the circumstances, as they had actually occurred, even to his claim upon her heart, and to her contrivance, in conjunction with the officer, to evade his search.

Ned was puzzled — he was ashamed to disclose the whole of the affair to his sister, who was generally his counsellor in matters of the heart; none of which, however, in which she had been asked for advice before, had gone the length of a correspondence, and he could not bear to admit, that this very poor attempt at literature should be exhibited, as coming from a creature about whose delicacy, grace, and eloquence, he had been so long raving. His course was very soon determined upon. He, like many other persons much older and wiser, had been dazzled and deceived by appearances. His object had been a fair and honourable

proposal to a lovely, and, as he naturally imagined, a highly accomplished person—he had acted upon his feelings—he had opened a channel of communication in his own name—and if he had not conducted himself with quite so much prudence and caution as an older man would have done, still he had compromised neither his own honour, nor the young lady's delicacy. She, it appeared by her own admission, was expecting a favoured lover; so that it was rather an alleviation of his regret, than otherwise, that he had furnished so strong a written evidence of her own unfitness for the sphere of society in which, as his wife, she would have been destined to move. To act dishonourably by the dear confiding creature never entered his head, although her extraordinary willingness to grant him a meeting so soon as she had ascertained that he was of a certain rank and standing in society, and so soon after her decided refusal of a continuance of their acquaintance, gave him a confused idea that she was not altogether so very correct as he at first thought; and he recurred to Moss's satirical observations upon the whole adventure, with the feeling which very often accompanied similar references, that, after all, nobody knew the world better than Mr. Godfrey Moss.

Under all the circumstances, he resolved to cut the connection at a blow—to decline the visit—to admit the superior claims of the expected Romeo—and to take a desperate measure in order to rid himself at once of an entanglement, out of which, however much he might admire the personal attractions of Miss Scrimshaw, he plainly saw he could not otherwise come fairly, clearly, and honourably; and, accordingly, without farther consultation or consideration, he wrote a note, full of extraordinary civility, stating that he was unfortunately obliged to leave London; and as the young lady had, in her letter, been so clear and explicit, he thought it would be better, for both their sakes, that they should not expose themselves to the needless ordeal of a meeting, from which no ulterior good could accrue to either; and having sealed and directed his brief, but pithy epistle, he rang his bell, and delivering it to his servant, ordered him

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to carry it forthwith to the inn, and on no account to wait for an answer.

Having concluded this business, he hastily deposited the gentle Martha's delicate epistle in his writing-desk, and repaired to the drawing-room, where a consciousness of the sort of work he had been doing carried his eye direct to the expressive countenance of his sister Katherine, who was sitting on the sofa, working, during the rubber in which the two Mosses, her father, and Apperton were engaged, looking so calm and so placid, and so very easy in her mind, that nobody who saw her would have guessed her wedding-day to have been so very near at hand.

But if Katherine appeared thus indifferent to matters which so nearly and vitally concerned herself, she was perfectly alive to the emotions by which she saw her brother affected. The moment he returned to the room, she was convinced that he had received some intelligence respecting his fair *incognita*.

"Well, Edward," said she, as he placed himself beside her on the sofa,—"any news of the fugitive?"

"Enough, dear Kate," replied he, "to satisfy me of the utter folly of farther pursuit; and so let me beg of you never to recur to a subject, the discussion of which can only serve to prove the blindness of youthful love, and a woful want of experience on the part of your poor simple-minded brother."

"The latter part of your position I am ready to admit, Ned," said Miss Maxwell, "but the former I ——"

"What, Kitty,—thinking of ——?"

"Edward," said Miss Maxwell, with a look of indescribable anguish, "never, never, as you value my happiness, allude to *that* person, or any subject with which he is connected."

"Well, a bargain then," cried Edward;—"*you* never mention my wild goose chase after my dulcinea of Drury Lane."

"What bargains are you making, Master Neddums?" said Moss, taking snuff, while his brother was dealing:—"I wish you'd ring the bell, and ask for something to drink."

"What, drink again?" said Maxwell, "fearless of consequences."

"He gets a good lesson here," said the clerical Moss: "there are no race of people in the world who eat and drink half so much as you surgeons and physicians."

"But we are like the fire-eaters at fairs," said Maxwell, "we have our antidotes and preventives."

"Ah, well, Mack," said the lay Moss, — "a few drops, more or less, now, will make no difference; and it's of no use to make an old man miserable by way of lengthening his days."

"Every glass of spirits," said Apperton, "is a nail in your coffin."

"Well, and what then, stockbroker?" replied the advocate of grog; — "the more nails in my coffin, the smarter my funeral. I can't help it; — come, Kittums, dear, mix me some ginnums and water, and let's see what's trumps. I shan't have you long to brew for me."

"I assure you, doctor," said Apperton, "you shall have the advantage of her abilities that way, so long as you choose to patronise her manufacture."

"Thank you, thank you," said Moss. "Well, where are the cards? Oh, Maxwell cuts, — to be sure he's used to it;" saying which, Moss received from the fair hand of his Hebe a glass of his favourite potation, the strength of which the innocent colour of the spirit did not betray. Placing it beside him, amongst his counters, he proceeded with his game, much more placidly than before.

"Kate," said Edward, joining her again on the sofa, "I have at length made up my mind to the deciding measure of my life. I have determined upon ending a short life of romance by obeying my father's wishes, and marrying Jane."

"Why, this is marvellous," said Kate: "after the continued confidential expressions of your distaste for Miss Epsworth, now all at once to resolve to unite yourself to her eternally."

"Sometimes these things are more matter of convenience than choice," said Edward.

"Why, yes, — that," replied his sister, in a rather confused manner, — "that is very true, I admit."

"And if, Kate," continued he, "a man cannot marry the only person in the world he really loves, and yet it is thought desirable that a marriage should take place, why, to me — at least at my time of life — it seems a matter of perfect indifference who is to be the person."

"You are cruel to your sister, Edward," said Katherine, "for the sake of showing your perception, and perhaps your wit. It is perhaps enough to gratify your vanity to tell you that I sensibly feel the force of your allusion, but my situation is wholly different from yours. I follow the wishes of a parent in taking a step which is in itself, as you know, at least a matter of indifference to me, yet I shall ever be found doing my duty, and exerting myself for the happiness and respectability of my husband: — with you ——"

"With me, Kate," interrupted her brother, — "how is it? — I have always been considered the future husband of my distant relative, Miss Epsworth. I have no positive objection to her, but I felt I never could love her enthusiastically, or with that devotion which I, like *you*, believe to be essential to what Apperton, in his mercantile jargon, would call happiness 'first class A,' and therefore I would rather have avoided an union with a girl who never could command all my affection. Since I felt this, I have accidentally seen a being whose beauty and manners have taken such full and entire possession of me, that my heart never can be entirely any woman's except hers — with *her* all further acquaintance must cease, and the first hope of my life in the way of love is blighted. Can you not then sympathise with me, when, feeling as I feel, I would now rather do that, which will gratify my family and connections by marrying as they wish, than give my divided affections to some object less desirable in their eyes?"

"Don't speak so loud," said Kate, perceiving that Moss, with his glass in his hand — his drinking glass — had fixed his eyes upon them with an expression perfectly intelligible to *her!* and, as she surmised, had overheard some part of

this curious disquisition upon the delicate separation of rapturous love and prudential affection.

"We are both strangely situated," said Katherine, softly, — "but you, Edward, far differently from me — you are younger — you have the world before you — and you are free. I have been addressed by a man, of whom all who know him speak well and highly, whose professional character and rectitude are the theme of universal praise; he is past that period of life which you have hardly attained, and seeks to enjoy a rational existence with a companion whom he has flattered with his affection and esteem — but you ——"

"I—I, Kitty, am just as desperate as you," cried Edward. "I have lost all that interested me. I care now for nothing but deciding my fate, and setting myself down in the country, a domestic young man at ——"

"Twenty-two years of age," said Kate; "no, no, if you love your cousin, marry her, she is rich and attached to you, I believe; it is, on all accounts, a very desirable match; but do not hastily shut yourself out from every chance of more exalted happiness, in a fit of spleen, caused, as I suppose, by the cold looks of a frowning beauty."

"Oh, no — no — indeed it isn't that," said Edward, not a little piqued at his sister's supposition, so injurious to his vanity: "my angel is kind beyond measure, volunteers a meeting, or even a visit to me here, but I have acted prudently and terminated the correspondence."

"For good and substantial reasons, no doubt," said Kate.

This was more than Edward could bear, and resolving upon making his sister a real confidante, he ran to his room, and returned almost breathless with the letter he had received from Miss Scrimshaw; the laughter excited by which, on the part of Miss Maxwell, was so loud, so long, and so very unusual, that it was unanimously resolved by the whist party to call upon the laugher to account for her extraordinary mirth. Edward for a long time resisted, on the plea, that a female's letter, however odd and strange, ought, under all circumstances, to be held

sacred; until an absolution having been granted by Kitty herself, who declared her right of judging in such a case, and who was anxious that the true cause of her gaiety should be fairly exhibited, the ever-memorable epistle was read by the young gentleman himself to the assembled whist players — among whom no one enjoyed it more than Moss, who chuckled to hear the triumphant fulfilment of all his prognostications, as to the forlorn damsel of Drury Lane.

Neither Maxwell, nor Apperton, nor even the vicar of Fudley-cum-Pipes was backward in raillery; and poor Edward was forced to retire to rest, under as heavy a fire of jokes and laughter as ever assailed an unfortunate Philander after a signal defeat.

One kind heart alone felt pain for him, and that was Kitty's; the conversation she had had with her brother was not so easily obliterated from her recollection; she saw by his manner that he was vexed and mortified, and that his vexation and mortification would speedily vent themselves in an avowal of his determination to marry his cousin, of whom his general opinion had been expressed so frequently, and in such unqualified language, as left no doubt of its sincerity. She hoped that this resolution would be re-considered, yet she saw fresh excitement to it in the ridicule heaped upon the frustration of his promised speculation, and sympathising in a sentiment which now appeared to her to be common to them both, felt convinced that he would plunge into the marriage which his heart rejected, merely for the purpose of rescuing himself from the character of a foiled, rejected, disappointed lover.

With what justice Miss Katherine Maxwell drew her conclusions, time, and perhaps the next chapter, will show.

CHAPTER VI.

There be three parts of business, — the preparation, the debate or examination, and the perfection: whereof if you look for despatch, let the middle be the work of many, and the first and last the work of few. LORD BACON.

"AND an excellent and wise resolution too," said Maxwell, entering the drawing-room, after a conversation with his son in the library, which had occupied the time from the breaking up of the breakfast-table until noon.

"I can guess what it is," exclaimed Katherine.

"So can I," cried Moss.

"Kate knows," said Edward, "and therefore I dare say Mousetrap is in the secret."

"We have laughed you into a marriage with the Jenny cretur," said Godfrey.

"And extremely happy it makes me that you have," replied the surgeon. "We shall now have a double wedding."

"From which," said Moss, "you expect double diversion, I suppose, as sportsmen do from double-barrelled guns; but how's that to be managed? — is Kittum's wedding to be put off?"

"If she will give us leave," said her father, "to postpone it for ten days or a fortnight."

"I'll answer for *her*," said Moss, "but I cannot answer for my brother, for he must be down at Fudley next week: — it is visitation time; and the Archdeacon, the Bishop's eye as I call him, comes there to poke about and see that the church steeples are all in order."

"But he can return to us," said Maxwell.

"But then," said Edward, "poor Katherine's happiness will be delayed nearly three weeks."

"Oh, pray don't mind *me*, Ned," said his sister. "If you, who are my junior, can consent to wait so long, surely I can bear the postponement."

"I hate putting off marriages," said Moss, taking a

huge pinch of snuff — " and Apperton is not here to consent."

" I should, under ordinary circumstances, decidedly object to delays in such matters," said Maxwell ; " but on this special occasion I confess I think it would be both agreeable and desirable to conclude the two affairs simultaneously ; it would look well, and I should feel settled and happy."

" And so should I, sir," said Edward, " settled for life."

" Yes, and another thing I can tell you," said Moss — " mark my words — if you stand shilly-shally with that Jenny cretur, your little whiffling friend, the monkey-faced major, will nick her up, as sure as my name's Moss."

" There, my dear Mousetrap," said Edward, " I flatter myself you are somewhat in error, — however, as I have said to my father, if the connection is to be made, it may as well be made at once. I am just in the humour to settle, and I should like, if possible, to make up a matrimonial rubber."

" There seems but one difficulty," said Kate, " and that arises thus: —Edward has for the last year pointedly and sedulously avoided his cousin Jane, and has merely passed a formal week or two at Dulham house in the course of the twelvemonth, and those by instalments of a day at a time: she I know has felt piqued, and indeed has frequently written to me, to express her apprehension that Ned didn't feel any great affection for her — now how the chilled embers of her attachment are to be fanned up into a flame strong enough to burn upon the altar of Hymen in fourteen days, ' from the date hereof,' I confess myself unable to exactly comprehend."

" Trash, about the altar of Hymen," said Moss, " who's Hymen? Jenny Epsworth will jump as high as a cretur with one leg shorter than another can, to get any body to marry her — and if ——"

" My dear Mousetrap," interrupted Edward, " a joke's a joke, but both Jane's legs are precisely of the same length, and therefore don't calumniate her."

" But if they are not, I suppose your father there can put

'em to rights," said Moss; "I don't care about her legs, nor you either ——"

"Come, come," said the elder Maxwell, "do not let us be too hard upon Edward — he knows that he obliges me when he consents to do that, which, in a worldly point of view, must be advantageous and agreeable to himself; and if Jane is not beautiful, we cannot help it; I have no doubt she is extremely good."

"And if not handsome," said Moss, "thinks herself so, which perhaps makes her good-natured."

"Still," said Kate, "I don't understand how this avowal, and declaration, and acceptance, and arrangement, and all the preliminaries and all the ratifications can be managed in a fortnight."

"I'll write to her to-day," said Edward.

"What, and order a wife, as you would a coat?" said Moss.

"No, I will explain my feelings and views," said he, "which I can do better in a letter than in an interview — then, if her reply is warm and encouraging, I will start, take advantage of the sunshine, soothe her, please her, win her, and bring her up to London, aunt and all."

"Depend upon it," said the elder Maxwell, "Edward knows the degree of influence he has over her, and so let him manage his matters in his own way. I confess the view he has at length taken of the case is highly satisfactory to me, and has been brought about, as he says, by reflection."

"And the refusal of Patty Scrimshaw, of the Golden Cross, Charing Cross," said Moss; "psha — trash — bou — but never mind — here comes the old six-and-eightpenny stuff again — however, my poor brother may toddle off to Fudley, by to-night's mail: he'll not be wanted for three weeks at least — perhaps never — eh, Kittums? there's no knowing what slips may happen between the cup and the lip."

"You make fewer than any man I ever met with, Moss," said the elder Maxwell.

"That's right, Mack," said Moss, "throw your wishy-washy gin and water in my face — thank my stars, I can get as much blue ruin as will satisfy me, for ten-pence a

day, so you need not reproach me with the expense of my beverage."

"Well, Kitty, we have *your* consent then, at all events," said Edward, "to the postponement."

"Oh yes," replied Kate, with a look which conveyed all her meaning to her brother, who knew precisely where her thoughts were, whenever the wedding-day was mentioned.

"I've a good mind to go down myself to Fudley with Jack," said Moss. "I'll take a box of cigars with me — and he has got the Gentleman's Magazine, which I havn't read over above ten times, down at the vicarage, and there's the apothecary, and the attorney, very conversible creturs — a little fresh air will do me good, and so will the new laid eggs, and the cream, and some of his old port; and then I shall be out of the way, and not spoil the billing and cooing. I'll be hanged but I'll go."

"You are not affronted, are you, Moss?" said Maxwell.

"No, not I," replied Moss; "you are a well-meaning cretur; when I'm hit I can hit again, but I don't mind *you*, though you *do* grumble at my excess — if you kept a good stock of brandy and gin in your house you would'nt feel it so much. All the spirits you buy, go to keep dead men's fingers and toes in, and such trash as that."

"I shall never forgive you, my dear Mousetrap," said Kate, "if you desert me."

"I'd rather die — and that's saying a great deal for a fellow so fond of living as I am," said Moss. "No — no — I'll be off to-night — I'll pack up a fortnight's stock of linen in a pocket handkerchief. I shan't want to change my coat, or the *et cætera*, so I can pop a razor in my waist-coat pocket, and borrow a brush at my brother's. I hate parade, and preparation; there's nothing like compactness for comfort — no sooner said than done."

After which brief lecture upon the luxuries of life, Godfrey Moss removed himself, for the purpose of communicating to the vicar the proposed postponement of the wedding, and his own proposition of accompanying him into Lincolnshire.

It was not until after a long conversation between the brother and sister, that Edward resolved to adhere to his

determination with respect to Miss Epsworth: he had promised his father — his hopes had been blighted — and so he went over all the reasonings of the previous evening, and at length proceeded to write the avowal of his anxious desire to conclude that which had always been considered an engagement between them.

When Apperton returned from the city, it was held to be a matter of delicacy, and even difficulty, to announce to him the change which had been made in the arrangements for the nuptials, but the elder Maxwell undertook to negotiate the matter, and having, by a circuitous route, mentioned the subject of Edward's much-wished-for marriage with his cousin, came at last to the point, and hoped that Apperton would not feel annoyed at their having altered and postponed the day without waiting to consult him, explaining, at the same time, the absolute necessity that existed, for the presence of the reverend vicar of Fudley-cum-Pipes at his living in the intermediate time.

Kate entered the room during the discussion, and candid, or perhaps careless as she was upon the points of etiquette connected with the approaching ceremony, even *she* thought it necessary to put on an air of something like pique and dissatisfaction at the alteration.

"Then when is it to be?" said Apperton.

"We now propose to-morrow three weeks," said Maxwell.

"Let me see — Tuesday — Thursday — Friday, — that will be the 14th," said Apperton.

"Exactly," said Maxwell.

"Twenty-two days," said Katherine, with a semi-sigh.

A pause ensued. The father and daughter were alarmed: they thought they had wounded the delicacy, and hurt the feelings, of the ardent lover.

"The 14th?" repeated Apperton, — "couldn't we put it off till the 21st — it would be more convenient to me, because of the 15th, you see, being the day for the account."

They were entirely relieved from all their embarrassments, and the 21st was fixed.

Kate looked at her future husband for above half a

minute after he had begged for an "extension of time," as he would have called it, and thought of the being, of whom she might, after the 21st, never think without sinning.

The new arrangement was reported to the two travellers, who expressed great satisfaction that they might have four more days in the country; but Moss made no addition to his stock of drapery on that account: and at past ten o'clock that evening the brothers were seated, "*vis-à-vis*," in the Hull and Barton Royal Mail, at Ware, having there refreshed themselves with supper, and whence they departed with lighted cigars in their mouths, and, as their calumniators say, a well-sized bottle of mahogany-coloured brandy and water in the coach pocket.

The evening in London was not passed in a manner half so lively or exhilarating: Maxwell and Apperton talked in an under-tone of securities and bonds, and a great fluctuation, and a wonderful opportunity of purchasing shares in the Steam Hatching Poultry Company for almost nothing; to all of which the surgeon appeared most attentively listening, occasionally rising from his seat, and standing with his back to the fire-place, rattling all the silver in his breeches pocket whenever the great gains, likely to accrue from the innumerable speculations of his enterprising son-in-law, were alluded to in the course of their interesting and exciting conversation.

Kate and her brother (whose spirits had met with a check, and whose views and feelings had taken a turn which led him to domesticate himself, and seek a sort of consolation in his sister's society,) remained in another sort of conversation at the other end of the room; and it must be admitted that a more dull, or even uncomfortable evening, had seldom been passed. Indeed, latterly the liveliness formerly imparted to Maxwell's family circle, by the continued droppings in of stray friends, had very much diminished since the formal announcement of Katherine's approaching marriage: those considerate acquaintances thought the domestic circle ought not to be broken in upon, and that the young people would be much happier alone. To be sure the casual every-day associates of the surgeon and his children did not see so deeply into the arcana of the

family circle as we do, nor knew so well the real state of affairs in progress.

The absence of the two brothers Moss was a subject of regret, silent on the part of Kitty, and avowed on the part of her father: the little bustle about the brandy and water, the fidget, the snarl, the joke, the grumble even of the misanthrope, would have come as reliefs to the family party, all of whom felt the announcement of bedtime to be the most agreeable event of the evening.

But the change was transient, for when Kate again found herself alone, again pressed her pillow and yet slept not; when she again revolved in her mind the importance of the step she was about to take, the eternal link she was about to forge for herself; a link which, while it bound her to one, whom, if she could not fail to esteem, it was clear to herself she could never ardently admire, ought at once and for ever to kill the hopes, which, though dormant in the heart of her who loves, in sorrow and in silence, never die; she sighed, and hid her burning face in her hands, until a flood of tears relieved her.

Within an hour of the period at which she saw her lover receive the news of the delay of his happiness, not only with composure and apathy, but with a declared wish of further postponement, she had seen in the newspapers the name, the dreaded name, which never passed her lips, and which acted upon her mind and feelings like the most potent spell of magic whenever she beheld it written. Edward had seen it too — it appeared under the head of India news, and announced the arrival of the adored, lost individual from Calcutta, at the Cape of Good Hope, for the benefit of his health.

He was ill — dying perhaps — far — far from his friends — from all that was dear to him. What then? — what interest had *she* in his welfare? — She had obeyed the dictates of reason and the commands of her father — she had discarded and rejected him — she had accepted another husband — and *that* husband would claim her, perhaps on the day — the very day — on which the only being she had ever loved was buried in a foreign grave, an alien from his home, an exile from his country. An honourable exile it

is true; but the thought of his distress, his illness, his sorrow, and his probable death, harrowed up her soul, and from the bottom of her heart did she repent, that what she now stigmatised as worldly motives had induced her, under any circumstances, to put the final fatal seal upon his exclusion from her love for ever.

It was vain to reason: the very fact of his anticipated death might have in some degree reconciled her to the step she had taken.

The report announced him "dangerously ill." He was, perhaps, already gone from this toilsome world, and Apperton would wed a widowed heart, wholly unconscious of the woe that pained it. It is not till the moment comes, when the struggle is to be made, that we know the importance of the sacrifice we are about to consummate. The frenzy of feeling, to which Kate Maxwell had worked herself by the recollection of foregone days, self-reproach for her former compliance with the will of her father, and equal self-reproach for her more recent obedience to him, was all new to her — her placid character, her constitutional calmness and coolness, all the philosophy of reason, and of a mind well regulated and highly principled, gave way to the agonising remorse which overcame her; yet, such is the strangeness of feelings so acted upon, that, recapitulating to herself the merits and claims of Apperton upon her affection, she rejoiced to find that no comparison could be instituted between *him* and the loved being she had for ever lost — if there had been an approach to rivalry in person or manners, mind or accomplishments, she might have been considered fickle, she might have been supposed by those who knew her secret to have desired to obliterate the recollection of her first love by some supposed superior attractions in another suitor. No one now could suspect her of such a desire in marrying Apperton, who was in every point as opposite to his predecessor in her heart as light to darkness.

When morning arrived, Katherine's natural propriety and prudence overcame the tumult of her passions, and at breakfast she appeared the same kind and affectionate daughter as ever; devoted to the duties of her station, and

resolved by the aid of that practical piety, which formed at once her consolation and support, to fulfil all that she had proposed to herself to do, and on which she knew depended the happiness of her father, and the comfort of his declining years.

Edward had not slept much, for he had in some degree, but not quite so deeply, involved himself in an affair, which, now the day had passed and night come, *he* almost began to repent of — indeed, it seemed as if the whole family were to be made wretched by matches of expediency ; save and except that Edward had resigned his prior attachment (if attachment it could be called) in disgust, while his sister's was not a voluntary abandonment of the fondest and earliest wish of her heart.

However, Edward was young and volatile, and, moreover, a man. The effect of love upon men is so totally different from that which it has upon the softer, gentler, and kinder sex, that no parity of reasoning will hold upon the different cases or symptoms. Edward "voted marrying Jane a bore, and even hoped she would refuse him," and so on ; at all of which votings and hopings his hearers laughed, and taxed him with a cautious mode of preparing for the worst, so as to give his vanity and *amour-propre* as gentle a fall as possible ; while Kate sat thoughtful and silent, with an aching heart, that, according to the ways of the world, and the usages of society, must have burst and broken, before she dared give utterance to her real sentiments.

It is difficult, and perhaps it would not be interesting, to describe accurately the feverish and uncomfortable state in which the day passed at Maxwell's. It seemed as if the last four-and-twenty hours had brought Edward and his sister more intimately acquainted with each other than they ever had been before — such is the force of sympathy. Edward had shown her that he was perfectly aware of her hidden sentiments and affections, and in full possession of the secret which she thought no human being knew besides herself. She had, up to this period, acting upon the feeling universally given by seniority, however trifling in youth, considered Edward merely as a boy — her little brother — and could scarcely believe her senses, when she found him

sympathising with her, and entering cordially into all her views and propositions, upon what, notwithstanding her subdued feelings, was, in fact, the important, vital point of her life.

The morning wasted away, and Edward felt the more worried from the consciousness that he could not hear from Miss Epsworth, nor ascertain the temper of her mind until the next day; for with all the activity of our post-office, and all the meritorious exertions of its excellent and indefatigable secretary, it has not yet been considered convenient (to say the least of it) to oblige one with an answer to letters sent a hundred miles, under some six-and-thirty hours, so that the impatient suitor — lover I can hardly call him — had nothing left for it, but to read and talk away time with Katherine, who, now she had established a sort of confederacy with him, referred with melancholy pleasure to the secret of her heart, in a manner which, had it been spoken of a day or two before, she would not have believed herself capable of adopting even towards *him*.

It was nearly three o'clock, on this day of anxious watchfulness, when a letter was brought to Edward, the superscription of which was evidently in the hand-writing of Major Overall. The moment he saw it, it struck him to refer to some connection or engagement entered into between the major and Miss Epsworth, for he had so high an opinion of Moss's almost intuitive perception of human character, that, contrary even to his own judgment, he believed he should find the major eventually his rival. His surprise, however, may be better conceived than expressed, when he read the following: —

"—— Hotel, Tuesday, two o'clock.

"Dear Maxwell,

"If you will permit me still so to address you, for under all the circumstances, and the correspondence which has taken place between you and Martha, there can be no doubt you are fully apprised, by some means or other, of what has taken place. The surprise is great — wonderful, extraordinary to *me*, and more striking than it could have been even to you; but I can hardly think you will consider

my conduct as amounting to a breach of confidence or friendship.

"When Martha received your appeal at the inn at Charing Cross, it naturally overwhelmed her, for though her feelings are perhaps none of the finest, still her apprehension of consequences was terrible! wonderful! and knowing, the moment she saw your name, the circumstances of our friendship, she felt herself placed in a most awkward predicament, and, as she has since told me, thought it best to admit the whole of the facts at once; indeed if you had not so naturally, — I will say, — cut short the correspondence, she would have told you herself the reason of her being in town, together with the arrangements made for the elopement and marriage.

"I assure you, I am half afraid to hold out the olive branch lest you should reject it. The temptation was too great, and I have fallen. I regret greatly, that we should thus have clashed; but as I believe the young lady's affections were really and truly mine, that fact of itself will, perhaps, reconcile you to a loss, which after all you will not, I am sure, regret. My poor trembling bride dreads to meet you, or your father, or your sister, of whom she tells me she is even more afraid than of any other part of the family. Why she has formed this opinion of Miss Kitty, I know not; however, if you will accept the proffered hand, and meet *us* with your usual kindness and good nature, we shall be delighted to receive you, either to-day, or to-morrow about four o'clock, here, when I will introduce you in form to Mrs. Overall.

"We shall remain but a very short time in England. Martha's mother, who came up with her daughter, in the first instance had made every preparation for our reception, and we are surrounded with boxes and packages nearly chin high, but we shall be too happy to have a reconciliatory meeting as soon as possible, and a declaration of peace, although I have most unexpectedly stepped between you and the happiness you proposed for yourself.

"Pray come to me, or, if not, write a line, and believe me — "Yours most truly,

"H. Overall."

"What a curious coincidence this is!" said Edward. "Only think, Kitty, the protector and now husband of my unknown wonder is neither more nor less than our volatile major — this is always the case, he bragged like a French count, and swore that he would marry nothing but a fortune, and now he has entangled himself for life with a poor girl, who, as she told me herself, has nothing upon earth she could call her own."

"Except her heart," said Kate, — "and *that* she has given to that odious, conceited little creature, Overall."

"Martha Scrimshaw, and Major Overall!" exclaimed Edward. "To think that the prodigiously refined major — the most delicate, the most particular, the literary, the classical, the all-accomplished traveller, who has 'seen the world,' should be really united to the authoress of the letter which I had the honour to read in full divan! However, I must admit that she *is* beautiful, and so I'll e'en go visit them — the removal from the Golden Cross to their present aristocratic hotel is judicious — but how will she refer to the meeting in the Park, to the thief-taker, and all that? and why could he have left her alone so long, and when did he come up from the Epsworths? I shall have a million questions to ask, with a determination to make no allusions, no, not even to the letter itself."

"Go, Edward, go and see them," said Kate, "and pray beg the young lady to dismiss all her apprehensions about me. How she has imbibed her fears I cannot guess — the major must have described me to her as a vastly formidable person; but pray do you re-assure her: if your father were at home we would of course invite them here; for after the intimacy of the major in this house, there can be no difficulty in offering them the little civilities of hospitality, during what he says will be their short stay in town."

"Well, Kate," said Edward, "after this never disbelieve in Moss's curious coincidences. I shall have, however, one laugh at Mousetrap — he always said Overall would marry for money — there we have him; but I'll lose no time — I'll be off — of course I shall be back to dress for dinner. I shall go nowhere into society till I hear from Jane — I think I may now make a confidant of

the major; for since he is *hors de combat,* I may trust him with less reserve than heretofore."

And accordingly Edward Maxwell bent his steps to the hotel which contained the major and the beautiful *incognita.* He considered on his way to their residence how he should behave; he anticipated feeling no small degree of awkwardness in beholding, in the bride of his friend, the recent object of his romantic search and enquiry — still he resolved to be cool; and having rehearsed, as it were, some few common-place civilities, wherewith to open the campaign, he reached the door, entered it, and enquired for Major Overall's apartments. He was ushered up — announced — a sudden whisking of drapery, and an abrupt bang-to of an inner-door, proclaimed the rapid retreat of the timid lady.

"Ned, how are you?" said the major.

"As well as any man very much surprised can well be," said Edward.

"I thought you would be astonished," said the major; "however, depend upon it, all's for the best — your discovery was very curious, astonishing, surprising. I should hardly have thought you would have remembered Martha's person after seeing her but once and for so short a time."

"Oh, I assure you, Overall," said Ned, "there are some people whose faces make a deeper impression in one interview than others are able to produce in years."

"And is Martha's one of those, d'ye think?" said Overall; "for *my* part, I think her hideous, horrid, dreadful, abominable."

Edward was astonished at the major's *tirade* against his lady.

"I am afraid," continued Overall, "that a sly habit of taking what our friend Mousetrap calls the ginnums has not a little contributed to destroy the personal appearance of the gentle Patty."

Edward's amazement here became immeasurable.

"I must go, however, and find my better half," said Overall: "she ran away the moment she heard you announced — for I do believe, even now — and I say it that shouldn't — if you had been only commonly attentive,

her affections would never have wandered: — wait a moment. Oh, Ned, Ned," added the major, as he was leaving the room, " you have been wicked, bad, inconsiderate — eh — and the result, more your fault than my desert."

And so he repaired to his lady's chamber, leaving Maxwell very much in doubt whether what he had seen and heard could be real, or whether the major, like his bride, had not been indulging in a little of Mousetrap's " ginnums" before dinner. To be told that the girl was not handsome, when he himself had been ready to marry her for her beauty alone — to be told that she indulged in the use of strong liquors, and that if he, Ned, had only played his cards well, *he*, the major, never would have obtained her hand; all this so completely mystified him, that his surprise and amazement were very little increased, when the door opened and exhibited Major Overall, leading in, as his bride and partner for life, the *ci-devant* Miss Jenny Epsworth, the intended wife of his thunder-stricken visiter.

" Jane !" exclaimed Edward.

" My dear cousin," cried the agitated Jenny, and before he was aware of what she was meditating, Edward felt himself clasped round the neck and wetted with either tears, or *eau de Cologne*, but which, in the confusion of the moment, he was quite unable to ascertain.

" What does all this mean ?" said Edward, disengaging himself from the tender embrace of his faithless cousin, " did you get my letter, and have you thus rapidly arrived to answer it in person ?"

" No letter, my dear cousin," said Jane, " my husband has got the letter you wrote to Scrimshaw. I feel it all — but I thought you neglected me — I thought myself abandoned, discarded — or else, I ——"

" There, my dear Jane !" exclaimed the major, " you need not make so many excuses — marrying *me* does not, according to my view of the case, require such great palliatives, — eh, wonderful, isn't it, Ned ?"

" I really am so overcome by amazement," said Edward, " that I am unable to collect myself sufficiently to decide what course of conduct I ought, under the circumstances, to pursue — I came here to visit *you*, major, and your bride."

"And here she is, Ned," said the major, in the highest possible pitch of his voice, and with a corresponding attitude of exultation.

"Then where is Miss Scrimshaw?" enquired Edward.

"Scrimshaw, my dear Edward," said Miss Epsworth, "is *my* maid's mother, whom we sent on to town to wait for us to avert my aunt's suspicion, for she was so dreadfully averse from my marrying the major, that——".

"Well, my dear girl," interrupted Overall, "there is no necessity, that I see, for dwelling upon an opposition which is so happily and fortunately overcome—it's absurd, ridiculous, coarse, low, unpleasant."

"Scrimshaw your maid's mother?" said Edward; "what at the Golden Cross, Charing Cross?"

"Exactly," said the major. "Jenny, as you must know, is timid, and never having been from under the shade of her aunt's wing, felt it would be more agreeable to her to have people about her whom she knew—so Scrimshaw was despatched to the Golden Cross, where you discovered her, and taxed her very naturally with a want of feeling towards *you*, and a disregard of your claim upon her young mistress."

"This," said Edward, "is confusion worse confounded—then you are not aware, Miss Epsworth, of a letter addressed to you by me yesterday?"

"Mrs. Overall, if you please, Ned," interrupted the major.

"Not I, Edward," said Jane: "what letter *do* you mean?"

"You had better return it unopened, Jane," said Edward, "and I think I had better retire from this most unexpected scene. I have been brought into contact unintentionally with a lady who has broken her faith, and a friend who has betrayed a confidence, and I——"

"But," said Jane, "you were aware of this before you came to us—you were aware that Scrimshaw was my maid's mother. You were aware of what was doing——"

"Not I, upon my honour," said Edward; "the whole thing has originated in a mistake."

"Mistake! Mr. Maxwell," said the heiress, bridling up; "then pray, sir, if you were *not* aware of all these circumstances, will you allow me to ask whom you imagined Miss Scrimshaw to have been; and to what claims, and what feelings, and what consideration, you refer in the letter which you addressed to her at the Golden Cross? Here it is, sir; and if you were ignorant of the business that brought that person to town, what business was it, that induced you to send such a letter, and receive an answer to it?"

Edward was, to use a nautical phrase, somewhat "taken aback" by this sudden squall.

"Come, come, Ned," said the major, "let's have no anger, you are caught in your own net. Jenny has regularly beat you — done — perfectly — thoroughly — completely — totally. Eh — who, as she says, 'did you think Miss Scrimshaw was?' — bravo — bravo, Signora Jenina."

Edward began to think he was cutting rather a sorry figure before the enraged Jane and her exulting little major; but all his present feelings were trivial, nothing, compared with his anticipations of those to which he would be subjected, when his four-sider of devotion and adoration, despatched yesterday, came to Mrs. Overall's hands.

"I confess candidly," said he, "that I had *no* conception who Miss Scrimshaw was, when I addressed her; but I am perfectly confident that the circumstances, if explained, under which I wrote that letter, would completely exonerate me from the slightest impropriety."

"Very probably, Mr. Ned," said Mrs. Overall. "What does *this* passage in your letter mean, pray? — 'That I have discovered you after all the precautions you have adopted, may prove to you at least that I am not to be baffled,' — pray, Ned, let me know, what does *that* mean?"

"Why, that means," said Edward, "that when I am resolved upon any thing, I generally carry my point."

"What," continued Mrs. Overall, "do you mean by 'the attractions of beauty would have failed,' or what does the unreserved avowal of your name, residence, and circumstances mean?"

"Upon my life," said Edward, "I can stand no more cross-examination, and all I can beg you now to do, is to recollect that whatever turn affairs may take in consequence of your marriage with the major, my being here is not to be considered as a matter of inclination or choice, and that I protest against my visit being construed into either an acknowledgment of your claims on Miss Epsworth, or an admission of *her* propriety or justice in attending to them. I leave you with no hostile feeling, but I must be understood merely to stand neuter, and that whatever civilities I may have proffered in my father's or my sister's name to the major and his lady, while ignorant of her character and condition, I must wait for a further consultation with my friends before they can be offered under the circumstances as they actually exist."

Saying which, Edward proceeded to the door. The major rang the bell, held out his hand to Edward, which he coolly declined; and bowing ceremoniously to the bride, the young man quitted the apartment. Before he had quite closed the door, or rather before the major had closed it upon him, Mrs. Overall leaped from her chair, and thrusting her head out into the passage, said, —

"And, Mr. Edward, when you call the great council of your friends, have the goodness to lay a copy of your letter to the supposed Miss Scrimshaw before them as the subject of their primary deliberation."

It would be quite impossible to describe the state of Mr. Edward Maxwell's mind as he retraced his steps to his father's house. The results of the deliberation in the "home department" we shall probably discover in the course of the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once. SHAKSPEARE.

As I have just said, it would be very difficult, nay, perhaps impossible, to describe Edward Maxwell's sensations when he regained the street; he felt in the midst of a whirlpool of contending passions and feelings; but amidst all the mortification, jealousy, anger, disappointment, and vexation, surprise the most unbounded, and astonishment the most unqualified, seemed to assail him most powerfully of all. His friend, the insignificant, vapouring dandy, whom he had himself taken down to the Epsworths to make a joke of, a butt of, a fool of, — that *he*, of all the people in the world, should have superseded and supplanted him in Jane's affections, — that *he* should have carried off the golden prize, was a blow which appeared irrecoverable; for although she was an object of something amounting almost to dislike, and certainly exceeding indifference to him, while he had her at his beck, secure and snug in the covert, ready, and only waiting his call to accompany him to the altar, now that he had lost her — just at the moment, too, in which he had resolved to take her, — now, he felt that he would rather have died than surrender her.

"If," thought he, "I had entirely discarded her — if I had married any one else — the case would have been different; but I had just determined to unite myself with her: and the worst part of the story is, that she herself must know that I had so determined; for the four sides, crammed full of absurdities and protestations, will reach her by to-morrow's post, and all my affectation of indifference will go for nothing; — but, above all, if she had *not* married any body else, I should not have cared one farthing for her rejection of *me*." In short, he saw nothing, heard nothing, understood nothing, until he reached home, save and except that through the darkness and con-

fusion of his mind, he caught one glimmering speck of light, in the consciousness that the illiterate being, whose letter he had received, was, after all, *not* the lovely creature for whom his heart was aching; and that to the trickery of Overall, and the fickleness of Jane, he was indebted for a discovery, upon which his future happiness or misery even yet so very much depended.

This, it must be admitted, was a redeeming consideration, at the moment, and there was even yet another circumstance which afforded him, in a minor degree, a little additional satisfaction. Perhaps the reader will anticipate what I mean — the absence of Mr. Godfrey Moss, the arch-tormentor of all deluded youths; whose raillery upon the subject of Ned's defeat by the major would have been hardly bearable. But even with these palliatives the young gentleman, who had been taught to imagine that he had Miss Epsworth's affections entirely in his own possession, and thoroughly at his command, could hardly arrange his feelings so as to be ready, immediately on his return to his father's, to explain the *dénouement* of the affair to his family.

He arrived. They had actually sat down to dinner. Who were there? — His father, his sister, and Apperton. — Any one else? — Miss O'Connochie, and her brother; Mr. Salt, a merchant, and a Mr. Dabbs, a friend of Apperton's. What a very disagreeable circumstance: if he declined dining at home after his knock had been heard (for the surgeon dined in his front parlour, and the different knocks of the family, on the house door, were as familiar to the ears of the inmates as their faces were to their eyes,) some enquiries would be made, and his absence would be attributed to rudeness, or perhaps illness; so resolving to seal up his thoughts and feelings hermetically for an hour or two, he entered the dinner-room, apologised for his lateness, ran up stairs for a few minutes to arrange his dress, and returned, making a profusion of excuses for his thoughtlessness, and asking permission of Miss O'Connochie and his sister to dine in boots.

There can hardly occur any thing much more unpleasant to a young man brimfull of a subject replete with

interest and importance to himself, his heart and mind actually overflowing with discoveries and disappointments, than to find his lips luted by the presence of a party of strangers wholly and entirely unacquainted with the subject which occupies his thoughts; and who would be utterly indifferent to his agitation and excitement, even if they knew the cause. Every word they uttered appeared to be drawled out with peculiar slowness; they ate more leisurely than they ever did before; the servants were less active in removing dishes and changing plates. The minutes he fancied drawn out into quarters of hours; and as for enjoying the conversation which appeard to Edward so needlessly and disagreeably to prolong the sitting, he might as well, and as advantageously to himself, have sat by the side of a murmuring stream, or have listened to the howling of the wind down a chimney. It seemed to his aching ears like one monotonous chant, wholly unintelligible as to its matter, and rather unpleasant in its sound.

Apperton was playing *croupier*, and Edward sat next to him, but he was sufficiently well acquainted with his brother-in-law, to know that however otherwise qualified for business or general socicty, he had not the faculty of taking a hint with dexterity, or of comprehending, except by a full, fair, and complete disclosure of facts and circumstances, any thing a friend might wish to impart to him. To have mentioned Miss Epsworth's name, would have been to rouse the elder Maxwell's attention; he would have required an explanation, and have insisted upon being let into the subject of conversation. To have whispered to Apperton the great cause of his mortification, the marriage of his betrothed with the major, would have been to produce from him some exclamation of wonder and surprise, which would necessarily have excited universal observation, and perhaps compelled him to a full confession of his sad defeat before the assembled party; so, poor Edward was forced to endure and suffer all the agonies of restrained grief, and suppressed emotion, until a fitter season than the present should arrive for unburthening his teeming heart.

The ladies sat longer after dinner than ever they had in their lives before, and when Kitty had hemmed once or twice, and Miss O'Connochie had put herself into the first position for moving, he saw them both return themselves to their chairs, upon the soft and good-natured appeal of his father, who said, — " Don't leave us yet, ladies," in a voice of melody, as discordant to *his* ears as the turning of a brazen candlestick, or a dry wheel grating on the axle-tree, neither of which would have set his teeth on edge half so dreadfully as the sweet tone of solicitation adopted by his respectable parent, to check the departure of his fair companions, and the dreadfully agreeable compliance with his wish, which both the damsels expressed visibly by smiles, audibly by words, and practically by re-seating themselves at the table.

Mr. Salt and Mr. Dabbs, both strangers to Edward, now essayed (each in his peculiar way) to reward the ladies for their good nature, by relating certain stories concerning ghosts and spirits, all of which they had from undoubted authority; and even Apperton, who never much joined in general conversation, undertook to relate a " very curious thing," which he had heard from the clergyman of the parish, where it occurred in Somersetshire, of a murder having been discovered by the continued appearance of a vision in the shape of a young woman, who eventually led an old attorney to a blacksmith's door, close beside which the body belonging to the said spectre was found buried with the throat cut. Thence imperceptibly the conversation was diverted to hanging; and a catalogue of crimes and punishments was rehearsed, which Edward thought would have lasted until midnight, and it might have done so, had not one of those venerable, infirm personages, who at that period slept during the night in upright boxes, and moved about occasionally in heavy great coats, armed with lanterns and sticks for the protection and convenience of themselves, just as a new subject was started, cried, in a sonorous voice, while passing the windows of the house, " Half-past nine ! " *

* The reader will please to recollect, that in the days here written of, such men as are here described were the guardians of our lives and properties. The

Amazement seized upon all the party; all, excepting Edward, thought it impossible it could be so late; he was astonished that it was not very much later: but late or early, certain it is that no watchman ever more suddenly or successfully dispersed a respectable party than the veteran of Burlington Gardens. The bell was rung, the ladies were roused, the beaux were on their legs; and Edward was, "door in hand," in less than a minute after the hollow sound had burst upon their ears; Miss O'Connochie making what the players call an "effective exit," by entreating the gentlemen to show a reciprocal affection for the society of the ladies, by coming to them as soon as possible.

Miss O'Connochie was an Irish spinster, some five-and-thirty years of age, who, as it appeared by her conduct and conversation, would have had no objection to assume legally and properly the name of Dabbs or of Salt, or, indeed, the name of any other gentleman who might have been disposed to entitle her so to do.

At all events, Edward considered the main point carried. The men of the party were what is called extremely polite, genteel men, and had, as they termed it, "a great admiration of the fair sex," and he therefore felt assured that they would not be long before they retired to the drawing-room. Maxwell the elder, however, rang the bell for another bottle of wine, which was produced amidst the cries of "No more"—"Oh dear, no more wine!"—"Oh, Mr. Maxwell, we have had quite wine enough!" and in spite of all these declarations, finished in about a quarter of an hour, when tea and coffee being announced, the party broke up.

Edward and his father remained in the parlour—he could no longer retain his information, nor restrain his desire to make a confidence. He stated to the old gentleman the occurrences of the day—the treachery of Overall—the marriage of Jane, as well as his own mistake with regard to the imaginary Miss Scrimshaw. Again the

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establishment of the admirably efficient police force since that period has rendered the costume of watchmen, and the custom of bawling the hour, obsolete, and made this annotation necessary.—1833.

servant came to announce the tea and coffee—but the sire and the son were still deeply engaged in deliberation, for it seemed to Edward that the old gentleman considered the loss of Miss Epsworth's fortune much more seriously than he had expected. This delay brought to the council the kind-hearted Kate, who, constantly solicitous about her beloved parent, became alarmed, lest his absence from the drawing-room should be occasioned by illness.

The moment she was made acquainted with the history, she, who entered so warmly and feelingly into the interests and hopes of others, felt herself totally incapacitated from joining in the common-place conversation which was in progress up stairs; and the whole family, with the exception of Apperton, whom they expected every minute to arrive for the purpose of enquiring the cause of the general defection, were unanimously of opinion that nothing could be so dreadful as having to entertain their present visiters; Miss O'Connochie having before dinner announced that her pa and ma were dining somewhere in the city, and would send the carriage to fetch her after they had returned home.

Common civility, however, decided the movements of the family, and they agreed in the absolute necessity of facing their friends, and endeavouring as much as possible to divert their attention from the more serious affairs of the family during the stay of their company; and accordingly they repaired *en masse* to the drawing-room, where they separated themselves amongst the group, and kept themselves purposely from any allusion or observation, each, however, while making the agreeable, *thinking* of no earthly subject but the one.

Maxwell, Dabbs, Salt, and Apperton, made up a rubber, which promised to engage them for some time; Maxwell, being a disciple of the old school, who shot with a single barrelled gun, played billiards with the mace, and could not endure short whist.

Edward took a book into a corner of the back drawing-room, to affect to read; but he was very soon driven thence by the gentle and insinuating Miss Geraldine

O'Connochie, who made herself particularly agreeable to him, by rallying him on being in love, and hoping his fair one was neither inconstant nor unkind.

Apperton interlarded his deals and tricks with a continued reference to Major Overall, whom he several times pronounced to be one of the cleverest little fellows he had ever met with, wondered where he was, and hoped he would be back in London before long.

Kate knew that nothing would so completely answer the double purpose of stopping Miss O'Connochie's comicality, and gratify her vanity, as asking her to sing, which she accordingly did, and was rewarded for her civility by immediate compliance on the part of Geraldine, and two family looks; one from her father, who detested music while he was playing cards, and the other from Edward, who, bored as he was by the conversation of the young lady, would rather have endured any thing than her execution (taken in a legal sense) of Moore's melodies, which, although herself Irish, and professing to have heard the author himself perform them, she murdered with malice prepense, and aforethought, in the most hardened and unfeeling manner.

"*Il n'est si grand jour qui ne vienne à vêpre,*" says the old French proverb, and with it Edward endeavoured to console himself, reflecting like the Italian turnspit (the Italian turnspits Major Overall would swear were coherent animals), that hard and uninteresting as his labour might be, the gigot would be roasted at last; and, distracted as Edward was, the reader must imagine, for I cannot attempt to describe the effects upon his patience, and the equanimity he either possessed or affected to possess, when, after the last lingering guest but one had actually departed, (which departure, however, did not occur till past midnight,) Doctor and Mrs. O'Connochie were announced, and ushered into the drawing-room. They could not think of losing the opportunity of coming up to see dear Mr. Maxwell, when they called for their daughter, and who, now that they had dropped in just as the reduced party were enjoying that social and sociable repast, which, how-

ever basely and injudiciously decried in many families, was, as I have already said, observed and maintained with all its rights, privileges, and immunities at the surgeon's, they could not resist partaking of it.

Mrs. O'Connochie was prevailed upon to take a glass of warm red wine and water, with a bit of sugar in it, and the worthy doctor induced to take the thinnest possible slice of ham, just to "relish" one tumbler of gin punch, which he had so frequently admired whenever Godfrey Moss happened to be in town, and which the fair Katherine could not refuse to make after the so much approved fashion;—never, in short, were people so chatty, so conversible, and so pleasant, as upon the very night when their presence was purgatory to the whole family, whom they thought they were pleasing and delighting by their stay; and above all of the agreeable people was Mr. Dabbs, who had exhibited some amatory prepossession in favour of Miss Geraldine O'Connochie, and who was more facetious than he had ever been before in his life, especially on the subject of love and fidelity, the constancy of woman, and the deplorable state of the poor unfortunate devils who were sometimes jilted,—a misfortune which never could be qualified in his mind, if it was not made clear to him that the discarded lover had made his advances with interested views, and attacked the lady for her fortune's sake, and then, he was pleased to add, he thought it served the money-hunter right.

But Mr. Dabbs was kinder than could possibly have been expected: he was so very good-natured as to stay even after the O'Connochies were gone, on purpose to praise the gentle Geraldine, and perhaps ascertain the amount of her fortune; for which purpose, and because he thought it civil to wait for, and walk city-wards with his friend and introducer, Apperton, he whiled away the time, by making himself a second glass of hot brandy and water.

As this disposition to wait for Apperton was becoming more and more evident, and as it was thought right and proper by the Maxwells, if not absolutely necessary, under the circumstances, to call the said Apperton, being the son-in-law elect, into their cabinet council, for the purpose

of determining forthwith what course was to be pursued with respect to the major and his bride, Edward contrived to give him a hint that they wished to speak to him before he went off, and that he had better convey another hint of a similar nature to his very attentive friend, Mr. Dabbs. This he did with the greatest clumsiness imaginable, by telling him *totidem verbis* that he had better go, that it was getting very late, and that he need not wait for *him*, because he was wanted to discuss some family matters of great importance, which they could not talk over while *he* stayed.

This pure, generous, and unsophisticated avowal of the fact, reduced Mr. Dabbs to the necessity of swallowing the boiling potion he had recently made; his performance of which feat, since it was long before the exhibition of Monsieur Chabert at the Argyle Rooms, filled the surrounding spectators with wonder, and produced a sort of professional joke from Apperton, upon the rate of insurance taken for throats: it moreover filled the eyes of Mr. Dabbs with involuntary tears, wiping which, and smarting under the scalding inflicted upon him by his extraordinary civility, he took his leave, apologising for what he had been so candidly made to feel was the peculiarly tiresome length of his visit, at the same time gently reproaching his friend, for not having earlier in the evening told him that he was not going to accompany him in his walk homeward.*

At length, however, the house was cleared, the servants ordered to bed, and the highly excited conclave assembled for the important discussion. The facts of the case were clearly and distinctly stated by Edward, and the question which immediately presented itself for debate was, whether under the circumstances Kate should visit the newly married lady on the following day, as the major had expressed

* Chabert was a Frenchman, who used to exhibit at the Argyle Rooms. He went into an oven at baking heat, and remained there uninjured: he eat fire, and drank prussic acid—or at least pretended to do so; until at last the enlightened public became so highly incensed against him, because he would not take prussic acid in reality, that a popular cry was raised against him; and after being, as was generally believed, the innocent cause of burning down the building in which he played off his antics, he retreated to America, where he has been since "pretty particularly" hoaxing the citizens of the United States with a repetition of his performances.—1833.

a hope she would, or whether Jane's conduct had really been such as to justify a total separation from her and her husband, and an entire "cut" for ever after.

"The loss of the fortune," said Apperton, "is you see already definitively decided: not one per cent. of that will be recovered by the quarrel; and therefore if Miss Epsworth has voluntarily married the major, I see no reason why enemies should be made, or dissensions created amongst relations and connections, by refusing to receive or visit them."

"Much," said Edward, "depends, as far as I am concerned, upon the line of conduct Overall himself has observed in the progress of the affair—if Jane, as it seems from what I saw and heard to-day to be extremely probable, has thrown herself into the arms of this man, even though he *is* my friend, I ought rather to rejoice than lament—but if——"

"A great deal of this, Ned," said Maxwell, "I am sure, and quite sure, too, that you will admit it, has arisen from your own conduct towards your cousin. You have not evinced any affectionate disposition towards her. Month after month, week after week, you have received invitations to the house—you have seldom or ever gone, unless it happened to be in the way to some other and more agreeable engagement; and when you *have* paid your visits, they have been short and hurried. She must, doubtlessly, have felt this neglect, and, it seems to me, has acted upon the impulse of feelings, perhaps the strongest by which women are actuated."

"Well, my dear father," said Kate, "but surely Edward is not to be blamed for this show of indifference if he felt it—the hypocritical assumption of regard and esteem, without possessing them, is much more dishonourable than the candid, honest course he has pursued."

"Judging by that rule," said the elder Maxwell, "nothing, then, has occurred in the present marriage which ought to excite either disappointment or anger in any part of our family."

"No," said Edward, "nothing—only let it be recollected, that before breakfast to-morrow, Mrs. Overall will

have the power and the pleasure of exhibiting to her husband four sides of my letter entirely filled with prospects of future happiness, founded on the very esteem and regard, which now it seems I was extremely right, and very honourable, never to affect."

"Esteem and regard alone," said Maxwell, "are surely not the feelings upon which to marry."

Katherine's cheeks glowed crimson — she looked towards her father, who, affecting not to have encountered her transient glance, continued,—"For a young man of your character and disposition, something more than such rational views are necessary to enchain and hold you —and lamenting, as I do, the loss of a connection, which, in all other points, was very desirable, I must say, that if she felt herself neglected, and if, in consequence, her affections leant another way, I do not regret her avowal and decision in favour of the object of those affections; for recollect what a struggle she would have made, if, in compliance with the predestined arrangements of our families, she had given her hand to you, while her heart was another's."

This second exhibition of mental blindness to the parallel case actually in progress in his own family, and under his own eyes, had nearly thrown Kate off her guard; but such is human nature, and such its infirmities, that Maxwell, man of the world as he was, quick and penetrating as were his intellect and his judgment, was positively unconscious that he was arguing with all his power and ability against the very course he had himself pursued with respect to his much loved daughter, now actually sitting before him.

"The question must be decided to-night," said Edward; "for I believe they quit London for the Continent to-morrow or the next day."

"I wonder who the major has letters of credit on," said Apperton; "do you happen to know who their bankers are?"

"Not I," said Edward, who could neither help smiling nor looking at his sister.

"But pray," said the elder Maxwell, "has her aunt been reconciled to the marriage?"

"Quite the contrary," said Edward; "the *young* folks seem quite in suspense as to the line the old gentlewoman will take—but of course we shall hear from Dulham in the morning. I know that her aunt was so decidedly favourable to the completion of our engagement, that no power or persuasion would have induced her to consent to a deviation from it—hence the necessity for an elopement; for, even though she should have changed her opinion with circumstances, it was quite out of the question, after all her declarations, that she should admit it."

"Yes; and I," said Kate, "have reason to know, that the old lady's warm and candid expressions of delight at the prospect of your marrying Jane were amongst the horrors that kept you so much away from them."

"Well," said Maxwell, "my opinion is, that we had better wait for the arrival of the post to-morrow—let us see the view which the old lady takes of her niece's conduct, and how she explains her own share of the business, and the origin and course of the affair altogether; it will then be time enough for us to decide upon the line we shall adopt towards her. I quite agree with Apperton, that continued animosities in families are dreadful: we are none of us perfect; and if our own relations and connections will not make allowances for the infirmities of human nature, the indiscretions of youth, or the ill regulation of passion and feeling, who can we expect to view our errors with leniency?"

"Ditto, sir, ditto," said Apperton. "The bargain is struck, the interests of the firm are consolidated, and I really think that it will be to the advantage, and for the respectability of all parties, to give them credit in our accounts."

"Well, then; we delay our final decision till the morrow," said the elder Maxwell, "so get you to bed, Kate—you must not keep yourself awake, because you are disappointed of a companion in matrimony. If we had known all this, we need not have delayed your——"

"My dear father," said Kate, "good night—Apperton, you will be here at breakfast—only think what an

escape Edward has had, in the absence of poor dear Mr. Moss — how he would have triumphed in the fulfilment of his prophecy about the major and Jane Epsworth."

"I assure you," said Edward, "his being away has not been one of the least qualifications of my distress upon the occasion, for, by the time he comes back to open his batteries upon me, I shall have grown case-hardened and callous."

When Kate, having taken leave of the party, had retired, Edward, who felt that there was yet something on his part to do, and who doubted whether, instead of receiving the major amicably (supposing the decision to take that turn), he ought not, under the circumstances, to call him to account for conduct which at present remained unexplained, and by which he had supplanted him in the affections of a young lady to whom he was actually engaged, and to whom it might naturally have been supposed he was devotedly attached, was about to open his heart upon his honourable scruples to his father and future brother-in-law; but, considering the relationship in which both those gentlemen stood to him, the affectionate kindness of the one, and very little experience in affairs of honour in the other, he resolved to conceal his feelings upon the point that night, and, as early as might be, on the following morning, take the opinion of a friend, who, during a life of active military service abroad, and of constant association with the best circles at home, had established and maintained a high and unsullied character for decision and courage, tempered by sound discretion, and regulated by an intimate acquaintance with the usages of society — to him, unbiassed and unprejudiced, as of course he was, Edward resolved to submit the circumstances of the case, satisfied, that whatever the result might be, his honour would be safe in the hands of his friend, and that he should, with greater comfort and satisfaction, recur in after times to an affair, his conduct in which had been conformable to the suggestions of one so competent to advise and direct.

Apperton's feelings were all engaged and interested in the actual loss of property, which was the natural consequence of Jane's infidelity, and Major Overall's marriage;

and even Maxwell himself seemed, from the very first, more affected by that particular point of the business than any other. It was evident, now that the thing was settled, that he was anxious for a pacific conclusion to the affair, and for what is called "making the best of it," strengthening himself in that view by sundry proverbial axioms of his son-in-law, to the effect that "what is done cannot be undone;" so that when the family of the Maxwells retired to their rooms to rest, I can confidently say that the current of their thoughts set towards the pacific.

At breakfast they again assembled, little the better for their retirement the night before. New interest, and a new turn to affairs, however, were given by the arrival of the expected letter from Dulham, in which the old lady expressed her grief and sorrow at the event, consoling herself with the reflection, that she was now aware of the safety of her poor niece, blaming her for her precipitancy, so totally unexpected by her relations, and declaring her determination never again to see her, or pardon her conduct, unless the Maxwells generously set the example. She said that she, of course, possessed the feelings natural to her nearest living relation; but she also felt it her duty to the memory of her late brother, and to the character and feelings of his surviving connections, to express and continue the manifestation of her entire disapprobation of a step, a connivance in, or an approbation of which on her part, she should have considered most dishonourable and improper. The letter contained a lengthened, and evidently sincere, vindication of herself from any participation in Jane's misconduct, and a fervent expression of her entire ignorance and want of suspicion of the meditated elopement. She was aware that Scrimshaw, the mother of Jane's maid, had left the neighbourhood, and once was surprised by finding her niece apparently interested in that person's journey to London; but knowing that she had always been a favourite dependent of hers, she saw nothing particularly to excite her attention, little thinking that this faithful envoy was in the pay of the major, and sent forward to prepare accommodations, and make purchases for her dear young lady, and her volatile little husband.

"Scrimshaw!" exclaimed the elder Maxwell, when he heard the last paragraph of the old lady's letter read. "Why, Ned, you seem to have been doubly unfortunate — was not Scrimshaw herself the beautiful creature whom you followed and hunted, after having saved her life in Long Acre?"

"That was *my* error," said Edward; "in pursuing the beauty, I hit upon the soubrette — by some pantomimic trick my lovely *incognita* contrived, as it now appears, to escape me, and having been thrown upon a wrong scent ——"

"You shot at a pigeon and killed a crow," said Apperton; "and *I* think, Master Edward, if you had never seen that beautiful creature, as you fancy her, the chances are that Jane would not now be Mrs. Overall."

"Oh, never mind thinking of what is past," said Kate, anxious to soothe and conciliate; "it is quite clear, as far as Mrs. Epsworth is concerned, that she is no party to the runaway marriage, therefore she stands clearly exonerated. She says she knows their place of residence, but that she has not written to her daughter, although she has forwarded a letter, she thinks from Edward, to the hotel where they are: this is perfect candour; and, above all, she makes our reconciliation to the bride and bridegroom a condition of *her* forgiveness. Now the question is, can we under such circumstances withhold our pardon, seeing that it involves the separation of two such near and dear relations?"

"As for me," said Edward, "I am prepared to do any thing that is fair and just towards Jane, upon the conviction, which I have no hesitation in avowing, that whatever other consideration might have weighed with our families, my heart never was much concerned in the matter; but there is something due, I think, to my personal character in the affair, and I cannot consent, at the outset of my life, tamely to submit to the exhibition of a friend, in the character of a rival, without at least obtaining an explanation of the circumstances under which I have been supplanted."

"My dear Edward ——" said Maxwell.

What more he would have said, it is not possible for

me to record, seeing that the arrival of a servant, armed with a large packet, stopped the current of the old gentleman's speech — it came from Major and Mrs. Overall — and was directed to Miss Maxwell. The unexpected arrival of this flag of truce suspended not only hostilities but debate.

Katherine broke open the packet: it contained a letter addressed to herself, and a somewhat larger one directed to her brother. She handed it to Edward, who, with a trembling hand, rapidly tore asunder the envelope. It contained his own last letter to Jane, and the following lines from the young lady herself: —

"Dear Edward,

"Enclosed is the letter to which you alluded when you visited us at our hotel yesterday. The character in which it is possible you may have addressed it to me, is one from which I ought not now to receive any communication; besides, it is directed to Miss Epsworth, and that *not being my name,* I do not feel justified in opening what was meant for *another person.* I have written at length to your sister; she will, I dare say, show you the letter, as I have desired her to do so; when she *has,* you will perhaps judge more leniently of *my* conduct than you are yet prepared to do, and at all events more favourably of the conduct of others who are dear to her who most sincerely subscribes herself,

"Your faithful friend,

"And affectionate cousin,

"JANE OVERALL."

"A perfect angel!" exclaimed Edward; "I never thought she could be half so amiable. Here is my letter unseen, unopened, unlaughed at: one thing is certain, she could not have acted in this manner without, at least, the assent of her husband."

"I must say, as far as it yet appears," said the elder Maxwell, "the girl has behaved most honourably."

"But she cannot give back any of her money," said Apperton.

"And therefore," said Kate, "it is useless our talking about it. Here is her letter."

Kate read as follows: —

"My dear Katherine,

"I am not certain whether, under the very peculiar circumstances in which I have placed myself, and the very decided step I have taken, I should have had courage to address one, who, with the affection which I know she entertains for her brother, might possibly, nay, must feel herself wounded and offended by me. But his accidental visit — as it turned out to be — to *me* in the character of his friend's bride, and the receipt of the letter which I have herewith returned him, compel me to avail myself of the only opportunity I may have of palliating what I am conscious must be annoying and distressing; and justifying, as much as possible, conduct which, at first sight, may not only involve me in a charge of duplicity and fickleness, but implicate another in a still more serious charge of deceit and treachery to a friend.

"As disguise or concealment must be now unavailing, I shall merely throw myself upon your candour and impartiality to recall the conduct of your brother towards me during the last year or two; and I do this, not for the purpose of impugning his taste, or of reproaching him for his neglect, but merely to bring to your recollection the fact, that having been considered in *my* family, and in yours, as his affianced wife, he has, during a period of two years, passed altogether eleven days at Dulham, and those at different and divided times, and generally on his way to other places and other engagements. Whenever he has been here, his manner, although perfectly civil and good-natured, never exhibited any evidence of warm and affectionate feeling; and I might almost go the length of saying, without reflecting harshly upon any of his venial foibles, that more than once I have imagined myself rather an object for his amusement than of his regard.

"It may be that the very security he felt of possessing me — in short of commanding me — might have induced the indifference, which, if I never complained of it, I sin-

cerely assure you I have severely felt: but which most certainly would never have been spoken of by me, except in vindication of a partiality which I have no shame now in admitting for my present husband. His conduct to me has ever been kind and amiable. I am not to be told, Katherine, that I am deficient in some of those attractions which distinguish many other young women, but it may serve as some excuse for my conduct to say, that Edward's obvious conviction of my inferiority was a death-blow to my happiness and comfort; not because it conveyed to my mind the knowledge of my own imperfections, but because it convinced me how low I stood in his esteem, and how much more our marriage would, on *his* part, be a matter of duty than of inclination.

"People who have visited us, and Edward, even Edward himself, have formed a wrong estimate of my judgment and perception: they have thought that when they were pouring the most fulsome flattery into my ears, they could blind my eyes, and that the evidence of my looking-glass was to be entirely overthrown by their eloquent eulogiums upon my personal charms. They, and he, were very much mistaken; and my fate may serve as a warning to those witlings who pique themselves upon making what they call a 'butt' of any unfortunate young woman, who, too proud to acknowledge the pangs she feels, and too well-bred to be angry, submits to the raillery she cannot fail to understand with a smiling countenance and an aching heart.

"Edward is to see this letter — he must see this passage — it is better he should, for though I place him high above those who ordinarily practise the art of 'irony,' in the way I describe, I have received even from his lips, and the supercilious smile which curled them, torture which I have struggled with greater torture to conceal.

"These convictions, then, sufficed to assure me, as I have just said, that if Edward eventually fulfilled the intentions of our families, it would be either as a compulsory measure, or a cold compliance with the inclinations of others; and I confess I so plainly felt that he had himself so much loosened the chain by which I was bound to him,

that I doubted whether its total abandonment would not rid him of a disagreeable responsibility. That I was not very wrong, the circumstance which induced him to address old Mrs. Scrimshaw in a tone of adoration, which she, poor matter-of-fact-body, did not comprehend, and throw himself at her feet *by mistake*, is a somewhat satisfactory proof. It is true, this affair was not known to me until after I had decided on my plans, but it is to me something very like a corroboration of all my feelings and expectations on the subject.

"I have little left to add, but that little is of great importance, since between man and man such matters should be always clearly explained, — I mean the part which Major Overall has taken in the business. Throughout the whole of my acquaintance with him, the theme of his praise, and the object of his admiration, has been Edward. It was I myself who, with great difficulty, induced him to believe in his indifference for me: he referred constantly to our engagement, and never breathed a thought which could tend to weaken its importance and validity. In whatever has happened, I alone am to blame; for even with all his devoted affection for me, he never ventured to disclose his real views and object, until I had voluntarily and explicitly declared not only my conviction that I was disagreeable to your brother, but my firm determination never to ally myself by marriage to your family, on the terms upon which Edward alone seemed inclined to receive me. All that I beg on this point is, that you will clearly and distinctly understand that Major Overall's conduct throughout has been as equally regulated by a jealous sense of honour towards Edward, as by an affectionate regard and esteem for me.

"I have only to say, that if we are to meet again before our departure for the Continent, I shall most happily and gladly hail our re-union. Upon your decision, I am given to understand, by an emissary from Dulham, depends the forgiveness of my dear aunt. I will not so far impose upon your kindness as to make that a plea in my favour with you and your family, but a reconciliation with all of you, and above all with her, are the only things now wanting to

complete my happiness and comfort. Her blessing, and your smiles, will be invaluable to me — they depend on each other ; and if I can restore my husband to Edward's friendship, keeping, too, a share of it for myself, a heavy weight will be removed from my heart, and I shall truly and sincerely subscribe myself,

" Your happy and affectionate friend,

" JANE OVERALL."

" The thing is settled," said Old Maxwell ; " the girl is a girl of sense ; she has shown herself not the silly, demented creature, that Mousetrap set her down for ; she has exhibited intellect and spirit, good sense and good feeling ; and all I can say is, I hope, Mr. Ned, you'll make as good a match somewhere else."

" I think there will be no fight after this," said Edward.

" Fight !" cried Katherine, to whom this was exhibiting a new view of the subject ; " Heaven forbid !"

" I think the thing is uncommon handsome, altogether," said Apperton.

" I am afraid I have been blinded by prejudice," said Edward, " and talked out of my right feelings : however, that's past ; and, as far as I am concerned, I am ready on the instant to accompany Kitty to call on them, or to be the bearer of an invitation here."

" Then take the carriage this moment," said Maxwell ; " it is at the door, go — meet the reconciliation half-way — and that will be doing it well — bring them back with you, and let us have a happy meeting — I hate bearing malice."

" I never saw less disposition to maliciousness, in my life," said Kate. " Well, Edward, will you accept the mission ?"

" With all my heart," said Edward ; " only I trust I shall escape much questioning about Miss Scrimshaw's letter ; I declare, if Moss were in town, I would abscond at once — *there*, I must say my fair friend hits me hard."

" And yet only sufficiently to show her power," said Kate : " she does not dwell upon disagreeables ; so now hurry away with you, and we will arrange our scattered spirits."

"It will be an odd sensation, too," said Edward, "to ——"

"Hang sensations," said his father: "be assured you are doing what is right, and put all the awkwardness out of the question; so, away with you."

"And, Ned," said Apperton, "if you should happen to hear that the major wants any thing in my way, just speak a good word for your brother-in-law."

"Oh! depend upon me," said Edward, who in a few minutes drove off in the carriage for the hotel of his honourable, happy rival.

"His brother-in-law!" the words grated upon the ears of Kitty most discordantly: the dissolution of Edward's engagement with Jane would, three days before, have appeared to her a thing infinitely more improbable than the breaking off of hers with Apperton. It is sad to say, that these thoughts were not unaccompanied by a wish — but why betray the secrets of my heroine? — if heroine a reasonable, well-bred, amiable, quiet young lady, in Burlington Gardens, may be called.

Edward drove to the hotel, found the happy couple engaged in all the intricacies of patterns, which manufacturers and milliners were displaying to their eager eyes. His appearance of course proclaimed the result of the family council. Jane ran towards him, when he entered the apartment, and a kiss on her cheek and a shake of her husband's hand, ratified the treaty of peace, of which the preliminaries had been signed half an hour before. There was no delay in her acceptance of a seat in the carriage; and, while she was preparing for the excursion, the rivals entered into a familiar conversation, not without allusions to the great event; even jokes displayed themselves in the dialogue, which proved that all animosity was gone, and friendship was again happily restored.

Jane speedily re-appeared, looking, as Edward thought, better than she ever had looked before, and almost pretty; but fearful lest he should incur the imputation of "heart-breaking raillery," he held his tongue, and handed her silently into the carriage: the major followed; and just as Edward had set his foot upon the lower step, his eye was suddenly attracted by a passing female in deep mourning.

It was his mysterious beauty—he could not recede—he could not stop—he entered the carriage—the steps were clapped up, and the door banged to by the footman, and the horses were off in an instant. The mysterious beauty had vanished.

CHAPTER VIII.

We have a trifling foolish banquet towards. SHAKSPEARE.

LET the reader, if he have one spark of sympathy for Edward Maxwell, just think of his feelings at this moment; wedged into a carriage with a successful rival and a jilting mistress, and beholding again, and perhaps for the last time, the being about whom, in all the world, he was the most interested, and who had (unconsciously to be sure), in the first instance, put the final seal to his determination not to fulfil his engagements with his betrothed, and whose supposed ignorance and vulgarity, in the second place, had driven him to renew his suit, just at the very moment when the young lady had taken the most serious and effectual method of preventing its favourable issue.

Both the bride and bridegroom saw his confusion.

"A beautiful girl, by Jove," said the major. "Exquisite—Italian eyes—Grecian nose—eh—sublime—Jove—fine—delicious."

"So Edward seems to think," said Jane: "this is not your Miss Scrimshaw, is it?"

Never came a more mortal shot from deadly weapon, than this too admirable guess.

"No," stammered Edward, "no, not exactly."

"Oh, I dare say, *she* is something superlative," said Jane.

"Come, Jane, come," said her husband, with a look, the like of which she had never seen while he was her lover, "peace is declared—let's have no skirmishing."

This little dialogue might have been carried on in He-

brew or Sanscrit, instead of English, as far as poor Edward Maxwell was concerned. He had seen her; she was gone; she yet dwelt upon his sight, and on his mind's eye was indelibly engraven. An attempt to break into a conversation was useless: the very effort, mingled with the consciousness that it *was* an effort, defeated itself, and he gave it up; he found he could not rally; so pending this awful silence, the major and his lady exchanged the most affectionate glances, and the major laid his hand upon hers and patted it kindly and encouragingly, and then she withdrew it frowning and coquettishly, and looked at Edward, as if to warn her over gallant husband of the indecorum of his undisguised attentions to a wife, and the danger of her cousin's satirical remarks hereafter. Edward, however, still remained buried in thought, and sick at heart, that he should again have lost the opportunity, perhaps the last he ever might have, of enforcing his suit with the lovely "vision."

The first event which aroused him from the reverie into which he had fallen, and which it is but fair to imagine (even if I did not know the fact) Jane flattered herself was entirely occasioned by the sight of her happiness and that of the major, was their arrival at Maxwell's door. The sound of the knocker flurried the bride, who had always felt an inferiority in the presence of Katherine, not only on account of her character and accomplishments, but on the score of age (for the start of three or four years in early life is never quite made up in after times), and she accordingly breathed quicker, and looked at her spouse, and then at Edward, who, in handing her from the carriage, felt not only the friendly pressure of the hand he once expected to make his own, but an actual trembling, which announced that real timidity and apprehension of the approaching interview with his sister had some share in the tumult so visible in his cousin's manner and appearance; a fact for which, in the present temper of his mind, Edward could not, without this practical evidence, have given Mrs. Overall credit.

The scene when she met Katherine in the drawing-room is beyond my power of description: she shed floods of tears,

hid her face in her fair friend's bosom, clung round her, and performed a certain number of hysterical evolutions; while Edward walked to the window, totally engrossed with the thoughts of his dulcinea; old Maxwell held Jane's hand, and patted the palm of it, and the major murmured *sotto voce*, "Sensible — delicate — amiable — charming — affectionate — kind — good," and other words of similar import, always beginning his eulogies at the superlative point, and dropping, as if from the exhaustion of his eloquence, into the very bathos of common-place commendation.

Time, and a tumbler of cold water, brought the tender creature round; but she was not yet sufficiently recovered to bear a general conversation, and accordingly she and Katherine retired to the boudoir of the latter, where she detailed all the circumstances by which she had been induced to take so decisive a step; and argued the matter in the spirit of her conciliatory letter so effectually, that Kate, who was, in fact, the most strongly prejudiced of all the family against her, became a convert; while the major, in his very candid explanations to the two Maxwells, succeeded equally well in clearing himself from any imputation of treachery or deceit; and before three o'clock the whole party were as perfectly reconciled to circumstances and to each other, as the most sanguine peace-maker in Christendom could have hoped to see them. Letters were despatched to old Mrs. Epsworth, begging her to transport herself forthwith to town, to join the happy group; and if she did not feel inclined to accompany the new married people to the Continent (which Overall was perfectly resolved she should *not*), at least sanction, by her presence in the metropolis, the approaching nuptials of Apperton and Kate.

In the midst of this general consolidation of interests, as Apperton called it, there were two hearts that gladdened not — neither Edward nor Kate could command their spirits; no, not even their countenances, so as to fashion them into mirth. Edward's ardent and romantic devotion to the *ignis fatuus* which haunted him wholly unfitted him for any ordinary enjoyments, or an association with those who pronounced themselves (as all newly-married people do) the

happiest creatures upon the face of the earth; and as for Kate, holding as she did Major Overall in something very like contempt, despising his vanity, and laughing heartily at his affectation, *she* could not see the entire and complete satisfaction which he and his bride exhibited, and the enthusiastic manner in which the one spoke of what they *would* do in Italy, and the other talked of what she should see, and how they should live, without casting a look at the cool, collected, red and white countenance of her future husband; the phlegmatic contempt which characterised it, while he heard the major scream his admiration of the bright skies of Italia, and the classical recollections of the eternal city; and anticipating, in her mind, the years of common-place which she had doomed herself to pass, in the society of an individual for whom, whatever her esteem might be, she never *could* feel that enthusiasm which she once imagined the indispensable ingredient of happiness in married life.

Edward certainly had the better bargain of the two; for, in the first place, he was uncertain only as to what he might gain; in the second place, his loss was decided and ascertained: and now that he had again seen his adored, and seen her under the conviction that she was neither Miss Scrimshaw nor the illiterate authoress of the letter he had received, he had nothing to do but to hope and look forward. Kate had only to look backward and dread; however, the choice had been her own, she had played her own game, and the die was cast.

The elder Maxwell, after a certain time had been expended in conversation, thought, since the young couple did not blink the gaze of their friends in the morning, that perhaps, when it was later and darker, they might be disposed to partake of the family dinner. This, however, was impossible, for the major had promised to dine with his man of business, Mr. Palmer; and Mrs. Palmer, who was a very kind, good sort of creature, had suggested that the bride should not be left alone; that they would make her as comfortable as if she were at home; and knowing all the history of the case, she could feel no difficulty in going there, and so on; and, therefore, it had been settled that the happy couple should take their food at half-past five o'clock at

Mr. P.'s, his residence being located in Hunter Street, Brunswick Square; a part of our island which is bounded on the north by Barnet, on the south by Holborn, on the west by Burton Crescent, and on the east by Gray's Inn Lane.

Jane, now she had conciliated Kate, would very much have preferred passing the rest of the day and the evening with her; and was very anxious, recently as she had been married, that her husband should go and transact his business with Mr. P., as he called him, and make her excuses to Mrs. P.; but he frowned and shook his head, and said that they had prepared for their reception, and it would be a sad disappointment to P., and Mrs. P., and all the P.'s, if Jane did not go according to her promise, to fulfil an engagement which he had prudentially made, and she had gladly accepted, at a period when their entire reconciliation with the Maxwells, if even possible, was not considered probable.

The critics who have favoured the predecessors of this tale with their notice have been pleased to censure and ridicule the frequent recurrence in their pages to the dinners of the characters engaged, and the minute descriptions of the little peculiarities thereupon attendant. These discussions, however much found fault with, I beg to defend; inasmuch as England is a dining nation, and her people a dining people—as, indeed, Voltaire (no mean authority) said long ago. What is there in the way of show, of ceremony, of association, of charity, of pleasure, of conviviality, of business, in England, which is unaccompanied by a dinner? The coronation itself concludes with a dinner.—Is not the King's speech first promulgated to the members of either house of parliament after dinner?—can vestries transact parish business without dining?—with high and low, with great and small, eating is the soul and spirit of English society.

Who that had not dined, and swallowed wine enough to digest his dinner, could make the speeches which we see reported as having been delivered at tavern meetings? Why did Sir George Saville himself, after attending Crown and Anchor banquets for years, in furtherance of his great

passion for freedom, at length grow so disgusted with the undivided application of his colleagues and followers to those periodical feastings, as at last to declare it his opinion, that since they eat so much and did so little in the cause, they ought, instead of supporters of the bill of rights, to be called supporters of the bill of fare?

What would be my Lord Mayor's show, if it were not for the dinner? The dinner is the sugar after the physic; nay, the propensity is not confined to human beings in the metropolis, nor to the mere pleasure of eating—the delight of seeing others eat, is characteristic of a true Briton, and accordingly we find the galleries of tavern-rooms crammed with spectators of dinners, and are informed that at Pidcock's Menagerie an extra sixpence is charged for leave to look at the lions while they are feeding; in short, Life in London would be a dull work unless illustrated with *plates*.*

If this be the case, how shall a man attempt to describe London life, or life any where in England as it is, without talking of dinners? Follow the banker or the merchant into his smoky shop, or accompting-house, in some narrow lane in the city—there he is, in his dimly lighted den, hovering about with a pen behind his ear, pale and wan, like the wax-work in Westminster Abbey, dead and dressed; at half-past seven see him dining, the bright lights reflected from the shining dishes, his pallid countenance is absolutely illuminated, and joke and jest flow from his lips while he sits and enjoys his *entrée*, and sips his sillery. Look at the wholesale trader, gloomy in his warehouses, cursing tallow for being dull, praying that saltpetre may look up, or that madder may be quoted as per last; what is he at dinner time? he flings tallow and care behind him; saltpetre and madder never enter his head; he is all smiles and good nature, and looks, by ten o'clock at night, as if he would lend his neighbour a hundred pounds to save him from hanging—next morning, the tallow and the madder prevail again, and he is as dull and disagreeable as ever.

* Pidcock's Menagerie was contained in the upper apartments of Exeter 'Change. That building, amongst others, has disappeared from the metropolis since this book was published: its site is now covered by Exeter Hall, and various new, spacious, and commodious houses.—1833.

The lover who is making the amiable, flies to dinner, and sits either near or opposite to her in whom all his hopes and wishes centre; the look unseen, the remark unheard by any save themselves, are all given and taken so well at dinner; a smile or a good wish comes conveyed in a glass of wine; and an offer itself sometimes explodes with a detonating motto.

See the farmer strike his bargains over fat bacon and cabbage. Mark the tradesman coming into his shop from his parlour, smelling of onions, and chewing as he comes, the tough mutton which he as yet has scarce had time to swallow. Go to the assizes—watch the care with which the judges' dinners are served, so as not to interfere with the condemnation of culprits or the convenience of jurors! In short, (for where could we stop?) eating is the universal employment of our countrymen; and, as has been before observed, so much time is devoted to the operation, and occupied by it, and it is, in fact, so vitally interwoven with English society, that to give any thing like a faithful sketch of passing events, dinners must be served up on paper as well as in parlours.

What does that most admirable traveller, Fynes Moyrson, say in his interesting Itinerary? He says, "That one of the most important duties of all tourists is to observe the plenty of fishes or flesh, the kinds of meat or drink, with the sauces, and rare manner of dressing it." And one of the most curious parts of his narrative consists of these very descriptions. The reader shall judge for himself, taking it into consideration, that Fynes Moyrson's book was published in the year of our Lord 1617.

He tells us "that the diet of the Germans is simple and very modest, if you set aside their intemperate drinking; they commonly serve to the table sour cabbages, which they call *craut*, and beer or wine (for a dainty) boiled with bread, which they call *swoope*. They use," says he, "many sauces, and commonly sharp, and such as comfort the stomach, offended with excessive drinking; for which cause, in Upper Germany, the first draught is commonly of wormwood wine, and the first dish of little lampreys, (which they call nine auger, as having nine eyes,)

served with white vinegar, and them that take any journey commonly in the morning take a little brant wein (that is their *aqua vitæ*), and eat a piece of pliffer kerchen (that is ginger-bread); and as they have abundance of fresh fish in their ponds and rivers, so they desire not to eat them unless they see them alive in the kitchen; and they prepare the same very savourily, commonly using aniseeds for that purpose, especially the little fish, whereof they have one most delicate kind, called smerling, which in Prussen I did eat, first choked, then sodden in wine, and they being very little, yet sixty of them sold for nineteen *grosh*."

"At Leipsic," says Moyrson, "for *mere curiosity* I procured myself to be invited to a marriage feast in one of the chief citizen's houses. The marriage was in the afternoon, and at supper they served in a piece of roasted beef hot, and another cold, with a sauce made with sugar and sweet wine; they then served in a carp, fried, then mutton roasted, then dried pears, prepared with butter and cinnamon, and therewith a piece of broiled salmon, then bloated herrings, broiled, and, lastly, a kind of bread like our fritters, save that is made in long rolls and more dry, which they call *fastnach kuchen*, that is, Shrovetide baking," together with cheese; "and then," adds Fynes, with a sort of sorrowful reproach, "thus with seven dishes was a senator's nuptial feast ended, without any flocks of fowl or change of fishes, or banquetting stuff which other nations use, only was endless drinking."

"Whole barrels of wine (bushels of apples, pooh, pooh,) were brought into the stove, and set by us on a table, which was so placed, as, after two hours, no man in the company was in case to give account next morning what he did, said, or saw after that time. To nourish this drinking they used to eat salt meats, which being (upon ill disposition of my body) once displeasing and unwholsome for me, and I complaining thereof to my host, he, between jest and earnest, replied that the use of salt was commended in Scripture, alleging that text, "Let all your speeches be seasoned with salt," and then, said he, "much more should our meats be thus seasoned." Salt thus pleasureth their pallet, because it makes the same dry, and provokes the appetite of

drinking. For which cause also, when they meet to drink, as they dine with dried pork and beef heavily salted, together with cheese, sharp like that of Parma, so when the cloth is taken away, they have set before them raw beans, water-nuts (which I did see only in Saxony), and a loaf of bread cut into shives, all sprinkled with salt and pepper; the least bit whereof will invite him to drink that has least need."

Whether this quaintness of Fynes Moyrson, which, I confess, I think almost as delightful as that of Pepys himself, may be as entertaining to others as it is to me, I cannot pretend to say; but such an author dilating upon dinners is incalculably amusing—his account of the attachment of the Germans to their pigs, I cannot find it in my heart to omit in this place.

"To say truth," says Fynes, "pork dried, or bacon, is so esteemed of the Germans, as they seem to have much greater care of their hogs than of their sheep or other cattle, for in the morning when they turn them forth, they scratch them with their fingers, *as barbers do men's heads*, and bless them that they may safely return; and in the evening, when they are to come back with the herd, a servant is commanded to attend them, who washeth the dust from them as they pass by the fountain."

Moyrson, in fact, characterises all the nations he visits as I would fain do, classifying the different grades of society by their fare and food, and their modes of dressing and eating it. The Italians, the light-hearted, sweet-voiced Italians, he paints as rejecting with horror all the *cochonneries* of Germany. "Their tables," says he, "are spread with white cloths and flowers, and fig-leaves, with ingestars, or glasses of divers coloured wines set upon them; at the latter they touch no meat with the hand, but with a fork of silver or other metal, each man being served with his fork, a spoon, and a glass to drink." This expression of agreeable surprise, on the part of the observant Fynes, fully corroborates the history of Furcifer Coryat and his friend Whittaker, and only proves that the exquisite Sir Philip Sydney, and the accomplished queen, his mistress, sympathetically tugged at their rump-steak breakfasts with

their fingers; and that Sir Christopher Hatton, "so remarkable for turning out his toes," has many a time and oft played "pully hauly" with a maid of honour, at a tough leg of mutton in the royal palace. Conceive the delicate, amiable, persecuted royal Mary, Queen of Scots, in her lonely loveliness, eating with her fingers her last steak, the day before she received her last chop.

But Moyrson explains how it is possible to eat with a fork; for he says, "as they serve small pieces of flesh, and whole joints *as with us,* so their pieces are cut up into small bits *to be taken up* with the fork, and they seethe the flesh till it be very tender. They use no spits to roast meat, and feed much upon little fishes and flesh, cut and fried with oil."

All this Major Overall would have enjoyed, since it was one of his wonderful, magnificent, astonishing, curious boasts, that at Florence, he could scoop more comfort out of five hundred a year, than he could in London out of as many thousands—a carriage and servants, a suite of apartments, with marble floors and columns, an opera box, and salad, and macaroni for the whole season, served as well as at the table of his Eminence with the red stockings, whose little black-eyed *niece* was so particularly partial to him.

"The French," says Moyrson, "are said to excel others in boiled meat, sauces, and made dishes, vulgarly called '*quelques choses.*'" Kickshaws, I presume, was the *proper* word; but says Fynes, "in *my* opinion the larding of their meat is not commendable, whereby they take away all variety of taste, making all meats savour of pork, and the French alone delight in mortified meats: they use not much whole meats, nor have I tasted there any good butter, which our ambassadors caused to be brought with them, out of England."

"By the way," he says, "in Saxony, they have no butter, but use, in the stead thereof, a certain white matter called smalts."—"The French," he adds, "dine most with sodden and liquid meats, and sup with roasted meats, each having his several sauce."

"As in all things," says he, "the French are cheerful,

and nimble, so the Italians observe, that they eat or swallow their meat swiftly, and add, that they are also slovenly at meat, but I would rather say they are negligent, or careless, and little curious in their feeding. And to this purpose I remember an accident, that happened to a Frenchman, eating with us at the master's table, in a Venetian vessel governed by Greeks, and sailing from Venice to Jerusalem, who *turning his foul trencher, to lay meat on the clean side*, did so offend the master, and all mariners, as well the best as common sort, as they hardly refrained from offering him violence."

Moyrson speaks of the peculiar luxury of clean sheets at an inn in France, and observes, moreover, that in the confines of Flanders, every passenger has a *glass to himself*, "for," says he, "the French are curious not to drink in another man's cup;" and he further adds, that it is an understood thing, that if you are at an inn where the landlord gives clean sheets, you are to dine at his house always —but even then he says the chambers have generally three or four beds, and these never tenanted by one traveller. With bells to ring for servants, Moyrson is quite fascinated,—in short, he is so delightful in his innocence, and so instructive in his minuteness, that I could go on quoting as long as I could sit reading him; but I beg pardon for this digression, which is attributable, first, to my affection for Fynes, and, secondly, to the gratification I felt in finding so clever a man considering the table the test of society. This, however, being the case, and eating as common to every human being as his mouth, it is clear the modes and manners of performing that necessary operation must vary about as much, and, as I take it, are as indicative and characteristic of the different classes of society, as Mr. Deville the lamp-maker tells us lumps and bumps are, under other circumstances. The kitchen evinces a greater difference of rank than the drawing-room; and in giving the strong outline of a family, a much more clear and decided opinion may be formed of their manners and qualities by a sketch of their dinner-table, than of any other part of the *menage*.

I have said this much to show, that in a family like

Mr. Palmer's, the non-arrival of the "company" would have been a severe disappointment. Mrs. Overall was known to be a lady of fortune, used to every thing "nice and comfortable:" she kept her own carriage, her men servants, and all that; and, therefore, they must be very particular, and have every thing uncommonly nice for *her*—and so Miss Palmer, the night before, had a white basin of hot water up into the parlour to bleach almonds, with which to stick a "tipsy cake," after the fashion of a hedgehog, and Mrs. Palmer sent to the pastry-cook's for some raspberry jam, to make creams in little jelly glasses, looking like inverted extinguishers; and spent half the morning in whipping up froth with a cane whisk to put on their tops like shaving lather. And Miss Palmer cut bits of paper, and curled them with the scissors to put round the "wax ends" in the glass lustres on the chimney-piece, and the three-cornered lamp in the drawing-room was taken out of its brown holland bag, and the maid set to clean it on a pair of rickety steps; and the cases were taken off the bell-pulls, and the picture frames were dusted, and the covers taken off the card-tables, all in honour of the approaching *fête*.

Then came the agonies of the father, mother, and daughter, just about five o'clock of the day itself, when the drawing-room chimney smoked; and apprehensions assailed them lest the fish should be overdone; the horrors excited by a noise in the kitchen as if the cod's head and shoulders had tumbled into the sand on the floor; that cod's head and shoulders which Mr. Palmer had himself gone to the fishmonger's to buy, and in determining the excellence of which, had poked his fingers into fifty cods, and forty turbots, to ascertain which was firmest, freshest, and best; and then the tremor caused by the stoppages of different hackney coaches in the neighbourhood, not to speak of the smell of roasted mutton, which pervaded the whole house, intermingled with an occasional whiff of celery, attributable to the assiduous care of Mrs. Palmer, who always mixed the salad herself, and smelt of it all the rest of the day; the disagreeable discovery just made that the lamp on the staircase would not burn, the slight inebriation of the cook,

bringing into full play a latent animosity towards the housemaid, founded on jealousy, and soothed by the mediation of the neighbouring green-grocer, hired for five shillings to wait at table on the great occasion.

Just as the major and Mrs. Overall actually drove up, the said attendant green-grocer, the male Pomona of the neighbourhood, had *just* stepped out to the public house, to fetch "the porter." The door was of course opened by the housemaid. The afternoon being windy, the tallow candle which she held was instantaneously blown out, at the same instant the back kitchen door was blown to with a tremendous noise, occasioning, by the concussion, the fall of a pile of plates, put on the dresser ready to be carried up into the parlour, and the overthrow of a modicum of oysters in a blue basin, which were subsequently, but with difficulty, gathered up individually from the floor by the hands of the cook, and converted in due season into sauce, for the before mentioned cod's head and shoulders.

At this momentous crisis, the green grocer (acting waiter) returned with two pots of Meux and Co.'s Entire, upon the tops of which stood heads not a little resembling the whipped stuff upon the raspberry creams,—open goes the door again, puff goes the wind, and off go the "heads" of the porter pots into the faces of the refined Major Overall and his adorable bride, who was disrobing at the foot of the stairs.

The major, who was a man of the world, and had seen society in all its grades, bore the pelting of this pitiless storm with magnanimity and without surprise; but Jane, whose sphere of motion had been somewhat more limited, and who had encountered but very little variety either of scenery or action, beyond the every-day routine of a quiet country house, enlivened periodically by a six weeks' trip to London, was somewhat astounded at the noise and confusion, the banging of doors, the clattering of crockery, and the confusion of tongues, which the untimely arrival of the company and the porter at the same moment had occasioned; nor was the confusion less confounded by the thundering double knock of Mr. Olinthus Crackenthorpe, of Holborn Court, Gray's Inn, who followed the beer (which

as Shakspeare has it, "was at the door,") as gravely and methodically as an undertaker.

Up the precipitous and narrow staircase were the Major and Mrs. Overall ushered, she having been divested of her shawl and boa by the housemaid, who threw her "things" into a dark hole ycleped the back parlour, where boots and umbrellas, a washing stand, the canvass bag of the drawing-room lamp, the table covers, and "master's" great coats, were all huddled in one grand miscellany. Just as the little procession was on the point of climbing, Hollingsworth the waiter coming in, feeling the absolute necessity of announcing all the company himself, sets down the porter pots upon the mat in the passage, nearly pushes down the housemaid who was about to usurp his place, and who in her anxiety to please Mr. Crackenthorpe (who was what she called a nice gentleman), abandons her position at the staircase, and flies to the door for the purpose of admitting him; in her zeal and activity to achieve this feat, she most unfortunately upsets one of the porter pots and inundates the little passage, miscalled the hall, with a sweeping flood of the afore-mentioned mixture of Messrs. Meux and Co.

Miss Engleheart, of Bernard Street, Russell Square, who had been invited to meet the smart folks, because she was a smart person herself, arrived shortly after; indeed so rapidly did she, like Rugby, follow Mr. Crackenthorpe's heels, that he had but just time to deposit his great coat and goloshes (in which he had walked from chambers) in the black hole where every thing was thrust, before the lovely Charlotte made her appearance.

Here, then, at length, was the snug little party assembled, and dinner was forthwith ordered; Miss Engleheart made the amiable to Mrs. Overall, who was received by both the young ladies with all that deference and respect which the formidable rank and title of wife commands. The three ladies sat together: Mr. Palmer performed fire-screen with his face to the company, and Major Overall, having first looked at Crackenthorpe for about five minutes, with an expression of countenance indicative of thinking him capable of cutting a throat or picking a pocket, at

length disturbed the *tête-à-tête* which that respectable young lawyer was carrying on with the head of the house.

Mrs. Palmer at this period suddenly disappeared to direct the "serving up," and regulate the precedence of butter-boats, and the arrangements of the vegetables, which were put down to steam on the dinner-table in covered dishes, two on a side; a tureen of mock turtle from Mr. Tiley of Tavistock Place, being at the bottom, and our old friend, the cod's head and shoulders, dressed in a horse-radish wig, and lemon-slice buttons, at the top. An oval pond of stewed calves' head, dotted with dirt balls, and surrounded by dingy brain and egg pancakes, stood next the fish, and a couple of rabbits, smothered in onions, next the soup. In the centre of the table towered a grotesque pyramid, known as an epergne, at the top of which were large pickles in a glass dish, and round which hung divers and sundry cut-glass saucers, in which were deposited small pickles and lemons, alternately dangling gracefully. At the corners were deposited the four masses of vegetable matter before mentioned, and in the interstices a pretty little saucer of currant-jelly, with an interesting companion full of horse-radish; all of which being arranged to her entire and perfect satisfaction, Mrs. Palmer again hurried up to the drawing-room, as red as a turkey cock, in order to appear as if she had been doing nothing at all, and to be just in time to be handed down again by the major.

The table was soon arranged; the major, on the right hand of Mrs. Palmer, was doomed to be roasted by the flame of the fire; and the bride, on the right hand of Mr. Palmer, was destined to be blown to shivers by the wind from the door. Mr. Crackenthorpe, who stood six feet three without his shoes, coiled up his legs under his chair, to the direful inconvenience of the green-grocer "daily waiter," who regularly stumbled over them whenever he approached his mistress on the sinister side, and much to the annoyance of Miss Charlotte Engleheart, who had long had a design upon the said Crackenthorpe for a husband, and who was in the habit of toe-treading and foot-feeling,

after the custom of the tribes with whom she had been habituated to dwell.

Miss Palmer's whole anxiety was in the dinner; her heart was in the tipsy-cake, and all her hopes and wishes centered in the little jelly-glasses: divers and sundries were the hems and winks which she bestowed upon the waiter, in order to regulate the putting down of the different little niceties; and the discovery which, shortly after the appearance of the second course, was made, that a trifle in a white wig of froth, which had superseded the big pickles on the top of the epergne, was considerably damaged by the dripping of oil from the lamp, which hung invidiously over it, nearly threw her into hysterics.

Vain were all the protestations of Mrs. Overall, that she never ate trifle—vain were all the screams of the major, to re-assure her—vain were the pleadings of Crackenthorpe, and the consolations of Miss Engleheart; "it was *so* provoking"—after all the pains, and the cakes, and the cream, and the wine, and the whipping—"dear, dear, only to think," and so on, which continued till the trifle itself was removed; when Emma left the room to follow the dear object of her love into the dark back parlour, where the dessert was laid out, and where the said trifle, amidst papa's umbrellas, Mr. Crackenthorpe's goloshes, and Mrs. Overall's boa, stood untouched, in order, if possible, to skim off the oleaginous matter which it had imbibed, before it sank through to the "nice rich part at the bottom," and to rescue some portion of the materials, to serve up the next evening, when they expected a few neighbours to tea and supper.

It must be confessed, a more unsatisfactory afternoon never was spent; and poor Jane frequently recurred with regret to the agreeable society she had left. Even the major, after he had astonished the natives with accounts of Rome, and Florence, and Naples—his fêtes to four hundred nobles, with a closet full of cardinals, and a boudoir full of princes—his details of the Neapolitan state coachmen, driving unhatted, in judges' full-bottomed wigs—Roman butchers in togas—vipers at Pæstum, robbers at

Salerno, and fire-works in the eternal city, finding either that he was not understood, or, if understood, not believed, gave up the narrative and historical line, and took to listening; but he was there equally out of his element: the young ladies and Mr. Crackenthorpe talked about the play-houses, and Miss Engleheart seemed specially versed in the private histories of the most celebrated performers, and was acquainted with a family where she had met a gentleman, who had actually come out at one of the winter theatres in Jaffier.

Nothing requires greater tact in a man than to assimilate himself with the habitual conversation of those into whose society he may happen to be thrown: subjects which to one grade are of the most vital interest and importance, are to another race of people perfectly unintelligible; the diversion of a village pathway will furnish amusement and instruction to a party of country gentlemen, in whom the probable results of a Russian campaign or a Greek revolution excite not the slightest interest; and a set of sportsmen will discuss a fox-chase over a difficult country until they fall asleep, which would infuse a degree of opium into the ears of the town-bred cognoscenti, sufficiently strong to send them to their slumbers long before the "tellers of the tale" had sunk under their labours.

Overall reckoned himself what, when he was at Eton, he would have called a dab at this sort of adaptation of his mental powers; but he found himself, in Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, foiled at his own weapons, and beaten at his own game; for, although he did not know every thing that was going on in the world, the total ignorance of any thing actually stirring which his associates displayed put him entirely *hors de combat;* while the bride, fatigued partly with travelling, and partly with anxiety and excitement, concomitant with her new character, could scarcely keep herself awake until the travelling-carriage, made to go about the streets, with a pair of job horses, was announced. Indeed, the major himself, when he found the sort of person his *homme d'affaires* was at home, regretted not a little that he had not run the risk of offend-

ing him, and left his dear Jane to enjoy the society of her dear Katherine.

But something was to be elicited even in the deserts of Gray's Inn Lane and the wilds of Brunswick Square. Mr. Crackenthorpe,—a tall, bony, hatchet-faced young lawyer, either called, or about to be called forthwith to the bar, with a high aquiline nose, bristly light hair, swimming blue eyes, and huge white teeth,—a skeleton as to flesh, and in height a living slice of a sucking giant,—in the course of conversation mentioned the name of Somerford, a friend of his, with whom he believed Mr. Maxwell's family was acquainted.

Now the recurrence to Mr. Maxwell's family, under the circumstances, was not particularly agreeable to the major in a mixed company; and although peace had that day been declared between the high contracting powers, it still bore the appearance rather of an armed neutrality, than that of an alliance, offensive and defensive, as might have been wished; but when the minute major observed the opposite two yards and a quarter of humanity actually in motion, apparently with the design of explaining deliberately, and at length, the particular circumstances of his intimacy with Lieutenant Somerford, his irritation became evident.

"I believe," said Crackenthorpe, coiling up his legs, and thus endeavouring to get nearer Jane,—"I believe Somerford was at one time very intimate at Mr. Maxwell's—that was when they lived in Lincoln's Inn Fields, I believe."

"I really don't know," said Mrs. Overall, evidently betraying by her manner that she knew all about it.

"I do," said Crackenthorpe. "Somerford and I were at school together: he was considerably my senior."

"Always," interrupted the major. "I never heard any man speak of a schoolfellow, who didn't make the same observation—curious—odd—strange—hey, Palmer!—wonderful!—surprising—eh?"

"And before he left Europe for India," continued the tall lawyer, "I think it was very nearly a match in that

family—but your friend, as I take it, played the jilt a little."

"Oh, Mr. Crackenthorpe," said Miss Engleheart, "how *can* you charge any young lady with such atrocity?"

"Atrocity!" said the lawyer, "a mere exercise of intelligence; surely a lady may be very fond of a person in her early youth, and yet see cause, as she grows up, to change her mind."

"I can't agree with you there," said Miss Engleheart; "I think that a girl who——"

"Miss E., Miss E., my dear, here," said Mrs. Palmer, in a tremendous bustle, "my dear, would not you like a hand-screen, my love?"

"No, ma'am, thank you," said Miss Engleheart. "I say, Mr. Crackenthorpe, that a young woman engaged to be married to a——"

"Margaret, dear," said Miss Palmer, "where *did* you put the music of the—the—what do you call the thing?"

"Why," screamed the young lady, "one would think some of you here were inclined to deceive your swains, by the way you conspire to interrupt me."

"No, no," said Mrs. Palmer, "nobody wants to interrupt you, my dear child, only I thought the fire was too hot, and—ring the bell, Mr. P., we 'll have those things taken away."

The blundering confusion by which the little denunciation of jilting, which Miss Engleheart was about to pronounce, was checked, created too much bustle to escape the major; but even that might have blown over, had not Mrs. Palmer, as Miss Engleheart, tired of attempting to be didactic, was leading Miss Palmer to her seat, on a creaking music stool, before an upright Broadwood, gone up to the major's lady, and taking her by both hands, whispered, "You mustn't be offended, my dear Mrs. O., Miss E. knew nothing at all about *your* affair when she made her observations—only I thought it best to stop her in time, you know."

This clenched all; and Mrs. Overall turned from the benevolent mistress of the house with delight to the conversation of Crackenthorpe, who proceeded to explain how

very deeply *his* friend, Somerford, had been attached to *her* friend, Miss Maxwell, and how sorry he was to have heard of his death at the Cape of Good Hope; especially as he had reason to believe that some relation of his had expressed an intention of leaving him a very valuable property.

"I regret," said Jane, "to hear of the death of any person of whom I have heard such high and favourable opinions, and particularly at a time when, as you appear to think, fortune seemed inclined to smile upon him. However, since you have touched upon the subject, which is an interdicted one at Mr. Maxwell's house, I believe that there never was any change in Miss Maxwell's feelings towards him; she obeyed the positive injunctions of her father, and consented to give up all hopes of him; but——"

"I thought you mentioned after dinner," said Mr. Crackenthorpe, "that Miss Maxwell was on the point of marriage—is *that* quite reconcilable with the character of an affection, such as you seem to think hers to have been?"

"If you knew her," said Jane, "I think you could perfectly believe that it was. She established a line of conduct consonant with what she held to be her duty in obeying the commands of her father: several years, as many as seven or eight, have passed since she formed the resolution of conquering the attachment she had conceived, and she now consents to unite herself to a worthy and excellent man, upon a principle similar to that on which she relinquished Mr. Somerford."

"There is too much calculation in all that arrangement," said the long lawyer, "to promise any thing like happiness—a heart that can forget by order, and love by command, is not——"

"I did not say *that*," interrupted Mrs. Overall; "duty may decide a daughter to relinquish a loved object. I did not say she had forgotten him,—and duty may decide a daughter——"

"To love another," again interrupted Crackenthorpe.

"I did not say she *did* love him," replied Mrs. Overall. "I am as much of an enthusiast as you appear to be, in

these matters, and where indifference exists between two people so connected as man and wife, something more than indifference is likely to ensue."

"Why, then, according to your theory, Miss Maxwell has no pleasing prospect," said the lawyer.

"She is secure from those evils to which a person of weaker intellect might be subject," said Jane: "well-regulated and excellent as her mind is, and firm as are her principles, there is nothing to be feared for her, or the man she marries. He, on the other hand, is a well-meaning, honest, honourable person, full of integrity and common sense: he neither expects nor could comprehend that sort of ardent love to which you refer."

"My dear Jane, the carriage has been here these ten minutes," whispered the major, having roused himself from a sort of waking slumber, for that purpose; and moreover, because he heard his bride lecturing upon love, in a style somewhat too florid, and a manner somewhat too animated, to be quite satisfactory to him as a bridegroom.

During the conversation between Mrs. Overall and Crackenthorpe, which began at length to be rather interesting, inasmuch as it gave the lady an opportunity to descant, and that, too, upon a subject with which she was intimately connected, Miss Engleheart had been accompanying Miss Palmer in the beautiful English song of "Bid me discourse." Indeed, if these young ladies had not kindly begun their music, there would have been no conversation at all; and although Mr. and Mrs. Palmer watched the performance with all the natural anxiety of parents who pay for education, and in silence, perfectly consistent with their admiration of the result, Crackenthorpe and Mrs. Overall were too much used to the ways of society to lose the opportunity of the singing, to talk, and the major was by far too independent, too tired, and too fond of Italy, to do any thing but dose as well as he could, under the influence of the disagreeable noise which the two young ladies were making; while the poor things themselves, as far as they were personally concerned, would have given the world not to have been asked to exhibit

their little winning ways before the visiters,—she who accompanied being too much alarmed ever to keep with her friend who sang, and she who sang, trembling too much ever to shake, which, when she was not frightened, she could do as well as Catalani—at least, so one person in Bernard Street, Russell Square, had said and thought.

"We must wait till Miss Engleheart has finished her song," whispered Jane.

"Oh! she is singing, is she?" said the major—"oh! certainly."

"I still contend," said Crackenthorpe, who thought the major's interruption of his conversation with Mrs. Overall extremely ill-bred, "that Miss Maxwell will be extremely wrong to unite herself with her present lover, if, at least, she have a community of feeling with you, who are her friend."

"We think alike upon several points," said Jane, "but not on all."

"Miss Maxwell has a brother, I believe," said Crackenthorpe, "who either is or has been studying, as it is called, for the bar."

"Yes," said Mrs. Overall, blushing all over her cheeks and neck; "a very excellent, amiable young man—he—I—that is—I have a very high regard for him."

"I don't know him myself, 'personally,'" said Mr. Crackenthorpe, "but I have heard him spoken of frequently—idle, I believe, professionally speaking; careless, as rich men always are, who threaten to become lawyers—and rich, I am told, he will be."

"I believe, very well off," said Jane; "his father has been so long eminent in his profession, and——"

"Ah! but, besides that," said Crackenthorpe, "there is some cousin of his, in the country, who is very rich, I believe; but the difficulty is to get him to marry her, for I am told she is not exactly presentable in London society—at least as he thinks—a sort of dowdy dawdle. I heard a great friend of the family, Mr. Godfrey Moss, describe her one day I dined where he was, and we were discussing the Maxwells, without knowing how intimate Mr. Moss

was with them; and nothing, to be sure, *is* so awkward, as beginning a discussion about a set of people, with somebody, who, perhaps, is particularly interested about them."

"Yes, it is—it is very disagreeable," stammered Mrs. Overall;—"the music, I believe, is over; I must obey my lord and master—I——"

And up got Mrs. Overall, hardly knowing whether she stood upon her head or her heels, to seek her husband, to send for her boa, (which, in those days, was called a tippet,) and her shawl; and, burning with agitation, and shivering with horror at her own story, which had been so unconsciously detailed by her new and communicative friend, the discomfited bride beat a speedy retreat, and was handed down the little ladder to the little hall, by Mr. Palmer, who expressed a thousand delights at having had the honour of her company; while the major's shrill exclamations of "charming—kind—magnificent—snug—comfortable" were resounded through the whole building. Buttoned up in the carriage, up went the glasses, up jumped Walker into the rumble, and away went the horses.

When Mr. Palmer returned to the drawing-room, he found Mrs. Palmer in a serious agony, the girls laughing heartily, and Mr. Crackenthorpe, with his head above the lamp, making a sort of serio-comic face of despair. They had just informed him of the nature of the connection which was to have existed between Mrs. Overall and Ned Maxwell, and enough of the outline of the story to prove that if he had been dropping shot into the ears of the bride, he could not more effectually have agonised her. Miss Engleheart, in turn, became shocked at the errors she was told *she* had committed in censuring jilts, but reconciled herself by this question,—how should *she* know any thing about the private affairs of the Maxwell family? And in truth there would have been very little in her blunders, if Mrs. Palmer, with the sweet anxiety so natural to the tribe of dealers in matter of fact, had not undertaken to soothe away the unintentional allusions which, had they remained unexplained, would never have been considered any allusions at all.

Crackenthorpe, discomforted, prepared for retreat; not, however, before he had pronounced an eulogy upon his late lamented friend Somerford—upon that individual whose "once familiar name," as the popular Bayly has it, Miss Maxwell had forbidden herself to speak. By the account which might have been gathered of his merits and virtues, the late Lieutenant Somerford must have been a very paragon of perfection, and it would have appeared miraculous that Maxwell, indulgent father as he was, should have so peremptorily insisted upon his dismissal, if it had not been also recorded in history that the lieutenant was penniless. His commission was his fortune, and Maxwell, when Katherine was sixteen, designed her for a duchess. Time, and the disappointment of her fondest hopes, had, however, reduced her pretensions: she sank annually in attraction; and, during the last two years, her fall had been so rapid, that she had settled in the Stock Exchange; and, from the golden circlet with the strawberry leaves, the splendid equipage, and endless train of servants, she had descended to contentment in Burlington Gardens, with a city husband, and one pair of job horses.

The little party at Mr. Palmer's dissolved. Mr. Crackenthorpe re-embarked his long feet in his capacious goloshes; Miss Engleheart was littered up in the straw of a hackney coach, which her pa's footboy had brought for her; and the family of P.'s were speedily locked in balmy sleep; to which happy state, however, none of the party were reduced until they had seriously and separately thought over the previously curious *contretemps* of the evening; Mr. and Mrs. Palmer having re-discussed the dinner in detail, counted up the cost and charges, and lamented in vain the oily current which had spoiled the trifle—"*Parva læves capiunt animos;*" but this feast to them was nothing trifling—that they gave such an entertainment the reader should rejoice, because, if they had not done so, he never would have known the name of Miss Maxwell's favoured lover, nor have received such authentic intelligence of his melancholy decease.

CHAPTER IX.

As skilful surgeons cut beyond the wound,
To make the cure more certain. TOBIN.

So, then — the secret — that is to say, Miss Maxwell's secret, has been divulged, and the "once-familiar name" disclosed to the reader. As so much is known, perhaps it will be right to let the reader know a little more.

Somerford, then, was the son of a medical practitioner, whose success had not been perhaps equal to his merit, which was of the quiet, unpretending, and laborious school. In early life, the elder Somerford and Maxwell had been very intimate; but Somerford's habits did not assimilate with those of his fellow-pupil. In person plain, and in manners simple and unrefined, he failed to please where he was introduced; and although his skill was undoubted, his opportunities of exhibiting it were few; and after many vain attempts in London to rise above the current, which seemed to set against him, he died a suburban practitioner on a very small scale, leaving a widow and a son, Charles Somerford, who, during his youth, had been the constant associate of Katherine Maxwell, and almost the constant inmate of her father's house.

When the elder Somerford died, and the confined income of his widow, and the almost destitute state of the young man, became known to Maxwell, he exerted the interest he possessed in some high quarters, and procured him an ensigncy in the army, anxious at once to provide for the son of an old friend, and, to say truth, to get rid of a person for whom it was but too clear, even for his paternal eyes to doubt, his daughter had formed a most ardent and enthusiastic attachment. The regiment to which Mr. Charles Somerford was appointed was at Calcutta, and had only just gone to India: its return, therefore, could not be anticipated under eighteen or twenty years; and although this might seem something like banishing the lad, yet he

felt satisfied with the conduct he was pursuing, by establishing what Apperton would have called an "account current" in his mind, between the cruelty of separating young Somerford from his daughter, on the one hand, and the kindness and benevolence of providing for him, in an honourable profession, on the other.

When the announcement of the success of Maxwell's application was made, it was received by the young people as the death-blow to their mutual hopes. Somerford, whose education had been of the best, whose disposition was the kindest, and whose talents were really of the first order, was so identified by Kate with all her happy hours, and all her agreeable pursuits, that a separation from him was the very bitterest event which had marred the brightness of her yet short life. She had then a mother living, and in *her* kindness and sympathy, it is true, she felt some consolation; but it was poor indeed. The die, however, was cast.

Maxwell too clearly saw the dismay which the happy issue of his suit at head-quarters had caused in the young people; but he resolved *not* to see it. If Somerford was now driven to an acknowledgment of his feelings, he must, of course, exert his authority, and so put an end to the affair; because, if at any time he might have been disposed to listen to the supplications of his daughter to permit so imprudent a match, now the thing would be beyond madness,—since the young man was about to quit England for years, and must, of course, deprive her fond parents of an affectionate daughter's society. Maxwell, not stopping to consider that the last-mentioned objection was raised by himself, or, if he did consider, not choosing to admit that the principal reason for his selecting the army as the profession of a *protégé* whose education had been finished for other pursuits, was, that he might banish him from the society of his daughter, who, as I somewhere else have said, his wife and himself then intended for a duchess.

When Maxwell had arranged all the preliminaries for the departure of Somerford, he took care to manage so that his daughter and the young soldier should not enjoy the

satisfaction of a parting interview; he dreaded the effects of such a separation upon her sensitive mind, and arguing prudently that needless pain can do no good, contrived that Mrs. Maxwell and Kate should go for three days on a visit to some friends in Kent, while he busied himself with the exportation of the ensign, whom he never suffered to be out of his sight, until he had carried him, in the most affectionate manner, in his own carriage down to Portsmouth, and actually seen him take possession of his berth in the after-cabin, which had been secured for him on board the Honourable Company's ship, Mulligatawny, Captain Rice, in which huge ark Maxwell left him, and retracing his steps to London, arrived at his house exactly in time to receive his wife and daughter on their return from the country.

It so happened, that the wind chopping round to the "norrad" of east, the Mulligatawny got under weigh that very evening; bearing in her huge bosom Ensign Somerford, who, being in a state of utter dependence upon Maxwell, was prevented, by a kind of nervous apprehension which such unfortunate people feel, from even expressing a wish about Kate, or complaining of the extraordinary manner in which he had been kidnapped or smuggled away, without one word at parting.

Maxwell, over and above the fear he expressed lest the delicacy of Kate's constitution, and the sensitiveness of her disposition, should be injured by the agitation of a last interview with the young soldier, anticipated some direful results of a different nature from such a meeting. He knew that, with all the delicacy and timidity which are the sweetest attributes of her sex, Kate possessed a firmness of principle, and a feeling of right, so strong and powerful, that if, in the last few minutes of her association with the ensign, any promise of fidelity had been required, or any pledge given, he was convinced no power on earth would have shaken her resolution in abiding by it. This sort of engagement a woman keeps inviolable, even although she sees no prospect of its happy termination. Hundreds of hearts have been broken, and hundreds of lives have been sacrificed, by the rigid adherence to a faith once plighted.

Maxwell, by cunningly taking the young couple unawares, prevented the mischief; and accordingly, as we have just seen, he put the youthful warrior *hors de combat*, as far as concerned the amatory campaign, which he had too successfully conducted in the surgeon's house in London.

But although the system pursued by Maxwell was more likely to be successful than any other, it was not quite in accordance with the general leniency of his character: nor did he, with all his knowledge of human nature, and of his daughter's disposition, quite correctly appreciate the effect producible by the unexpected removal of Somerford from their family circle — unexpected perhaps it can scarcely be called, because his appointment had been discussed, and various preparations made for his outfit and expedition; but the loss of him without parting was unexpected: and it was not till the whole evening and part of the day succeeding it, on which she and her mother returned home, had passed away, that the fact of his being gone — actually gone — eternally gone — was communicated to her.

Who but a being who has felt as *she* did can describe the lightning flash of anguish which seemed to shiver her whole frame? It was a dream — it was false — it could not be reality — that she never, never more was to see Charles Somerford — the playmate of her childhood — the companion of her youth — the sharer of her heart. It was the first pang of real sorrow she had felt — it was the sundering of ties, of whose strength she herself was not before aware. It seemed as if her heartstrings had snapped.

Maxwell, whose scientific knowledge saved him from alarm for his daughter's physical security under the effects of her mental distress, contemplated the storm he had raised with more of satisfaction than regret. What he saw, more fully convinced him of the wisdom of what he had done; and his attention was chiefly directed towards assuring his wife, whose natural alarm for the fate of her child was not unmixed with a feeling of something like reproach towards her husband for what appeared even to her, especially now she witnessed the results it had produced, a needless refinement of cruelty.

But there was a reason for Maxwell's extraordinary cau-

tion, and unusual severity of conduct in this particular instance, which, to the world at large, will perhaps appear just. There *are* those to whom the distinction which gave birth to it will seem harsh and cruel; but against laws which religion enforces and society obeys, they must not murmur loudly, let them feel never so deeply.

The mother of Somerford was the illegitimate daughter of some wealthy person, and had become acquainted with her late husband in the country, where he had passed some of the earlier years of his professional career. She still survived: but the fact that the individuals to whose guardianship she had been from infancy confided were of a rank below the middling class of society, that her education had been extremely limited, and that her parent, whoever he might be, had never been personally known to those people; the sums allowed for her subsistence having been transmitted by an agent, on condition that the child was to pass as theirs, (to which deception the loss of an infant of their own, about the same period, was made subservient,) and in that character she married the elder Somerford, then acting in a subordinate capacity in the town near which she resided; nor did he know that his wife was not the daughter of Thomas Woodley, the miller of Rayford, until, on the death of her supposed mother, the old lady being (better late than never) conscience stricken on the point, stated the fact, that Sophy was not *her* child, and that the six hundred pounds which Somerford received as her portion, came not from her honest Thomas, who never was worth half the money, but from the father of the girl.

The respectable Mrs. Woodley, who could not "die easy" without disburthening her mind of this secret, unfortunately however deferred her communications to so late a period of her existence, that when Somerford, who was at her bed-side, pressed her to name the father of his wife, she could not rally sufficiently to explain herself, and expired in his arms without satisfying his very natural curiosity.

Somerford's situation was curious—in the chamber of sickness and death, and where his wife was bending over the bed of her supposed parent, in the midst of his cares

and anxieties for the safety of one so nearly connected with himself, and so dearly allied to his better half, he became suddenly and unexpectedly enlightened upon a subject, touching which his suspicions had never been in the slightest degree awakened; and, singular as it is to say, it is true that Sophy Somerford, from constant association with the Woodleys, had acquired unconsciously so many of their habits, and so much of their manner — not so advantageously to herself as might have been — that Somerford, deceived by this sympathetic resemblance, and ready, as all men and women are, to concede a "strong likeness" between parents and children, had reasoned himself — or perhaps looked himself — into believing, that his Sophy had her father's eyes to a turn, and, as Sheridan says, "her mother's chin to a hair."

After a seasonable period devoted to grief, and the performance of the last duties towards one, whom Sophy, even when she knew she was not her child, could scarcely bring herself to consider in any other light than a mother, the two Somerfords hunted every nook and corner of the old gentlewoman's residence, in hopes of finding some trace of the parents to whom the self-imagined orphan was really indebted, under Heaven, for her existence — but in vain. The conditions of secrecy had been so faithfully observed, and so religiously fulfilled, that not a letter, not a memorandum, not a paper referring to the subject, could be discovered; indeed Woodley had for so many years been considered as the father of the girl, that, added to the natural fidelity and firmness with which he kept the secret, the wish of his heart was, that Sophy herself should never be undeceived; and that his friends and relations and neighbours should alike remain ignorant of the real truth, and of how long he had been practising upon them a piece of deception.

That there *were* persons who could immediately enlighten Mr. and Mrs. Somerford upon the important point, there could be no doubt. Whether it was likely they would or would not, the couple most interested did not pretend to guess; but their speculations as to this intention or desire were very soon terminated.

Somerford and his wife, a few days after the funeral of his *soi-disant* mother-in-law, were seated by the fire in their humble home, the sorrowing Sophy having on her knee the identical Ensign Somerford of whom we are now treating, when the ostler's boy, belonging to the Green Dragon "up street," knocked at the door. The maid servant opened it, and Bill—familiar name—informed her, that a gentleman wished to see Doctor Somerford (so was the pale-faced stripling called in those parts) up at his master's house.

The fee-faw-fum feelings of poor Somerford were roused in an instant. A patient at the Green Dragon!—Not a moment was to be wasted. The traveller might die—or, perhaps, get well, before he reached him. In either case, a loss was to be dreaded; and, accordingly, great coat on, and umbrella under arm, lint and lancets in pocket, off goes Somerford, leaving the future ensign and lover, in a paroxysm of squalling, which not all the tender assiduities of his fond mother could assuage, and which made the small tenement they occupied ring again.

Bright visions beamed before Somerford's eyes as he paced, in the dark, towards the best inn. Some great person indisposed, might, perhaps, be cured by his skill and attention; and then, perhaps, he might take him by the hand, and then, perhaps, carry him to London, and bring him into fashion; then he might take his degree—and then set up his carriage—be made physician to some illustrious personage—and—with which step in the ladder of his life he reached the Green Dragon—where, in a very few minutes, he found himself *tête-à-tête*, with one of the healthiest looking persons he had ever seen, and whose disorder, if he had one, was not of that class, which evince themselves by external symptoms.

"Mr. Somerford?" repeated the stranger, enquiringly, as the waiter annouced the apothecary.

"Exactly so," said the apothecary.

"Mr. Somerford," said the stranger, "I am afraid I have disturbed you from your avocations, and called you, perhaps needlessly, from your home; but I—I—wished

to ask you a question, which, perhaps, you will excuse me for putting to you, when I assure you I do so with the best possible intentions."

"Sir!" said Somerford, somewhat puzzled.

"I believe, Mr. Somerford," continued the stranger, "you married a daughter of Mr. Woodley, an inhabitant of this neighbourhood?"

Now was the current of Somerford's thoughts changed. Phials, physic, leeches, lint, and lancets all disappeared from his mind. No longer did he see in the newly arrived traveller before him the patient seeking advice; in an instant he beheld the herald of his future fortunes, the man who was to inform him that his Sophy was the daughter of some great person who, for state reasons, had been hitherto immured in obscurity, and who, perhaps, had claims upon the thrones of half the countries in Europe.

"I did, sir," said Somerford—"that is to say, sir—I thought so, until the week before last."

"How d' ye mean?" said the stranger, somewhat moved.

"Why," added the apothecary, "then I came to understand that my wife was *not* the person she was usually taken for."

"Indeed!" said the stranger, evidently much agitated by this little bit of intelligence; "how were you undeceived?"

"Her mother," said Somerford, "that is, her supposed mother——"

"Stay, sir, let me see if the door is fast," said the stranger, walking to the said door, and opening it to ascertain that there were no listeners, and then closing it securely.

"As I was saying, sir," resumed Somerford, "her supposed mother——"

"I know," interrupted the stranger, "died about a fortnight ago—had you no suspicions before?"

"None."

"The father—that is, Woodley—then, never hinted such a thing?"

"Never," said Somerford.

"And the mother told you the whole story?" said the stranger.

"She did."

"Well, Mr. Somerford," said the stranger, with an increased show of courtesy, "it is upon *that* point I wished to speak to you. I suppose the old woman felt some scruples as to dying and leaving you in error."

"Exactly so," said Somerford.

"And you have, I presume, taken no steps in consequence of the disclosure," said the stranger.

"Steps!" said Somerford, with his eyes very widely open.

"I mean, you have not mentioned the circumstance to any of your neighbours?"

"No," said Somerford; "I thought, and my wife thought so too, that we had better keep the affair secret, and see how things would turn up."

"You haven't, I know, made any application to the real father of Mrs. Somerford," said the stranger, "and we very much applaud your conduct, for it is as well to be explicit at once; the portion you received with your wife was stated at the time to Woodley (who, of course, as if on his own part, told *you*,) to be the whole and last amount of what might be considered the charge upon her natural parent."

"I don't clearly understand, sir," said Somerford.

"I mean," said the stranger, "that when Woodley proposed giving his daughter, as you then supposed her, six hundred pounds, he gave you to understand that you were to expect nothing more."

"He did," said Somerford; "but we have received some small additional sum since the death of the widow."

"Now, Mr. Somerford," said the stranger, "although that was decidedly the understanding on the one part and the feeling on the other, it is not the wish of the person most intimately concerned in this affair rigidly to adhere to that determination; and since you have been put in possession of a secret, (the developement of which, however, can be of no advantage to you or your wife,) it will be the wish of that person to prove to you the needlessness of

any application to him, by meeting your views in any moderate way, so as to render your situation in life more easy and comfortable than it may be now; and I must tell you in fairness, that your having abstained from using the knowledge you have acquired, in a manner which might, particularly at this juncture, cause your best friend much inconvenience, has not been overlooked, but, on the contrary, is, as I before said, duly appreciated."

"Why, sir," said Somerford, not at all seeing the powerful kick he was about to give his future good fortunes, "I could not, very well, have applied to any body; for although poor old Mrs. Woodley told me the secret of my wife not being *her* daughter, she, very unfortunately, expired before she could explain to me whose child she really is."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the stranger, elevating his brows into a towering arch, and screwing up his mouth into the smallest possible circle, so as to produce an involuntary whistle. "Oh! then you are yet to learn whom your *best friend* is."

"Indeed, I am," said Somerford. "I married my wife because I loved her—I thought her name was Woodley; and it is not because she is called any thing else, sir, that I shall love her less, or cease to appreciate her good qualities. I have no right to be dissatisfied if her real parents never see her again; for those whom I thought, and whom she thought, were her parents, can never see her more on earth. The man whom I thought her father I thought a suitable connection for myself—he gave her a sum of money, which I considered a suitable portion for his daughter. To marry her, under all those circumstances, was the object of my ambition, and I succeeded. I gained all I wished for, and I wished for nothing more; and I am only sorry that the poor old gentlewoman said any thing about the matter, since it naturally unsettles my wife's mind, and renders her anxious upon a point about which I care nothing: all I would ask is, if her father be alive and wealthy, that when I die, and die poor (which I am sure I shall), he will not forget *his* child or mine."

Tears trickled down the stranger's face as the ingenuous

Somerford thus spoke the honest feelings of his heart. He took him by both his hands, and pressed them fervently; but it was quite evident to the stranger that such a man would live and die an unenriched apothecary.

"Mr. Somerford," said he, "you will lose nothing by this conduct."

"I confess," said Somerford, who did not appear conscious that he had said or done any thing particularly praiseworthy by making his declaration, "I should like to be trusted with the secret, for I could keep it, and I——"

"We must discuss that farther," said the stranger. "How miraculous that death should have intervened to save the old woman from perjury!—for she, like her husband, had been sworn to secrecy. And no paper, no document, nothing was left, by which the relationship can be traced?"

"Not one atom, sir!" said Somerford.

"Will you excuse me one moment?" said the stranger. "I have a small packet of papers up-stairs, which I will confide to your care, on condition that you promise me not to open it, until you receive a written permission. I think I may venture so far, without infringing my instructions."

Somerford bowed assent, and the stranger proceeded to fetch the packet.

"This is very extraordinary," said Somerford to himself, as he stretched himself in one of the armed chairs before the fire—"this will do: fortune has at length slipped the fillet from her eyes, and sees my merits. How delighted Sophy will be; and yet, perhaps, even now, I shall not know whose son-in-law I am. Poor old Woodley—and mother. Ah! well—they are gone, and God bless them; they were kind to me, and received me hospitably, when—no matter—I wish they had told me—but then they were bound to secrecy—sworn and so—psha! every thing is for the best, and some day I shall be as well off as Alexander Maxwell, perhaps, who has often told me I should never *do*. We'll see—we'll see."

Somerford stirred the fire—footsteps approached—his heart beat—he might, in two minutes, know all—at least—

The door opened, and Butley, the master of the house, appeared before him.

"Fine night, sir—rather frosty," said the landlord.

"Very fine, Mr. Butley," said Somerford—"all your family quite well?"

"All quite charming," said Butley—"never nothing the matter with them, thank God."

Somerford sighed—he was physician in ordinary to the Green Dragon.

"Strange gentleman that is," said Butley, "who sent the message to you."

"Strange!" said Somerford.

"Yes, he came here, and was in such a hurry to send, I thought he wasi ll. Is he quite right, sir?"

"Right!" said Somerford.

"Ah! isn't he a bit flightyish like?" said Butley.

"Hush, hush," said Somerford; "he 'll hear us."

"Gad, he must have long ears if he does," said Butley; "I should think he's nigh five miles off afore now."

"How d'ye mean—is he gone?" said Somerford.

"What! didn't you know that?"

"Not I; I was waiting for him."

"You may wait long enough then," said Butley. "He came here on horseback, and could not have come very far by the look of him; his horse was waiting for him in the yard, and he set off up town as hard as he could lay legs to ground, when he came out of the room."

"I heard a horse gallop away," said the apothecary.

"That were he," said Butley; "he gave the waiter five shillings for the messenger, and the room, and the lights, and the fire, and all the rest of it."

"Do you know him?" asked Somerford.

"No, sir," said the landlord—"don't you?"

"Not I," replied Somerford; "he told me he had a packet of papers to give me, which was up-stairs."

"He never set his foot on a stair in this house," said Butley.

"Why, then, I may go," said Somerford, "and all the story of the packet and the papers was just made up to get rid of me."

"I hope if he didn't leave any thing behind him, sir," said Butley, "he did not take any thing away with him."

"No," said Somerford; "I had none of what he wanted, which was information—so, good night, Butley."

"Good night, sir," was the reply, and Somerford proceeded homeward to relate his adventure to his wife, who was anxiously waiting his return. What she heard served only the more to inflame her imagination, as to her birth and parentage, and the first cross word that ever fell from her lips since she was married, was a snub to her spouse "for letting the stranger know how little he actually knew himself."

A woman never commits herself on such points—she seems to trifle while she proceeds steadily in her course, and gains all without conceding any thing; at least in the way of words. However, Somerford's contentedness and his avowal of unqualified delight in her society, soothed all, and after their supper of cold boiled mutton, and home-made pickles, served up at half-past nine, the doctor lulled his wife to drowsiness by reading, in the county newspaper, the details of the ceremony of the laying the foundation of the East India Docks, the promotion of Dr. Bathurst to the bishopric of Norwich, and the commitment to the Tower of Sheriffs Cox and Rawlins, for partiality at the Middlesex election; thus marking the period of Mrs. Woodley's decease and the stranger's visit, (which occurred in February, 1805, when Charles Somerford was about six years old,) from which time to the hour of Somerford's death, the visiter never re-appeared, nor did they ever hear further tidings relating to him.

The year following, Mr. Somerford, finding the neighbourhood in which he resided too healthy for business, and having no tie to it since the death of the Woodley family, but rather, on the contrary, many reasons for wishing to quit it, shifted his quarters to the neighbourhood of London. Charles was placed at Westminster school, and had the run of Maxwell's house, in which, as I have already said, although his mother seldom visited it, he was an almost constant inmate.

After the termination of his school career, the pursuits

of the young man were hardly decided upon, when in 1815 his father died, and early in the following year he obtained the ensigncy, was shipped on board the Mulligatawny, and by his abrupt departure caused the scene, from which I have ventured for a few minutes to withdraw the reader, in order to enlighten him as to some of the secrets of the Maxwell family, just resuming the thread of my narrative as the young lady has recovered her senses.

To a girl of sixteen, as Kate was at the period of this young man's departure, the events of such a day are memorable indeed. The horror of the shock she received was registered in her mind, along with the still more impressive scene of her mother's death, which occurred a few years afterwards; and to those events she recurred daily, throughout the after current of her life.

When she recovered sufficiently to be conscious of her actions, she still believed she had been told that Charles was gone, only to try her feelings for him. Indulged as she had been up to that period, she could not account for the unlooked for severity with which she felt she had been treated upon this one occasion. She sought him in the different rooms of the house, called on his name—but she saw him not—he answered not—he was at that moment thinking of her, and her alone, in the floating tavern, in which he was at once a resident and a voyager. In the drawing-room she found some flowers he had gathered the day she quitted town; they were still in the little vase where he had placed them; every word he had uttered during the process of arranging them to please her was brought to her recollection. Neither Gray nor Feinagle could ever have established so perfect a system of mneumonics as Charles Somerford had thus created for the benefit of Katherine Maxwell. She gathered them up—pressed them fervently to her rosy lips, hid them in her panting bosom, and placed them in the inmost recesses of her writing desk—where—listen, ye sceptics—learn, ye unbelievers in woman's constancy—they rested, dried, shrivelled, and colourless as they were, ay, even to the day before her marriage with Apperton, nearly ten years after.

I scarcely know how sufficiently to apologise to the reader for having thus episodaically taken him so far back in the family history. It was my intention never to have mentioned Somerford's name; but the communicative Mr. Crackenthorpe having blurted out so much, I felt it my duty to go the length of telling all I knew, although since that learned gentleman, at the same period that he mentioned his former acquaintance with Kate's early friend and lover, announced his death, it may, perhaps, be thought somewhat superfluous. Never mind—if the reader will consent to go on with the narrative, he may perhaps find out that I *had* a reason for troubling him with the particulars, which I have just had the pleasure to submit to his notice.

It can scarcely have been until this period of my story that the reader has properly appreciated the peculiar situation of poor Katherine; and even when Mrs. Overall visited her the next morning, P. P. C., she, aware as she was of the real state of her feelings, with respect to poor Somerford, felt considerably puzzled to know whether she should communicate the intelligence she had received of his death; which, although it would utterly kill the hopes which Kate had long ago herself resigned, would, at the same time, painful as it must be, leave her more free and unencumbered by a feeling (perhaps undefinable) which might increase her unhappiness, in fulfilling her father's favourite project of marrying his finance minister. Jane, after a mature and lengthened deliberation with herself, and a debate and consultation with her husband, decided upon breaking the fact to Kate as she had heard it; in which decision she was, moreover, strengthened, the following day, by her aunt, who, delighted to find that the Maxwells had set the example of reconciliation, had started, with four post-horses to her carriage, in order to grace the family circle, which clustered round the fire-side in Burlington Gardens.

To describe the conversation between Kate and Jane, since its aim and object are known to the reader, would only be to tire him with useless repetitions, and excite him perhaps by needless sorrow. Miss Maxwell received the

news of Somerford's death, prepared as she had cautiously been by Mrs. Overall, with calmness and resignation; he had long been dead to *her*, and she even felt that his affections could not have been so strong, so genuine, or so lasting as her own, since she had received but two letters from him, even before her father put his solemn veto on their correspondence. Kate, not thinking that such a father could upon such a point go the length of suppressing some of Charles's earliest communications, having satisfied himself by the contents of those, of the absolute necessity of extending the sphere of his authority to the farthest shores of India, in order to prohibit an interchange of sentiments, feelings, and protestations, which, if continued, he felt assured could terminate only in the discomfiture of all his schemes and speculations.

There is no grief so severe as that we are forced to conceal. The sigh which might give relief must be suppressed, the tear must be checked ere it falls, and all the deep-felt sorrow left to prey upon the heart and mind. Kate dared not even seem dejected on the day of the happy meeting of the family; even Godfrey Moss and his brother were expected to join the party at dinner-time; and, to add to her misfortunes, a favourable fluctuation in the shares of the Anglo Siberian Snow-water Company had so exhilarated Apperton, that he was to be seen skipping about the room, ever and anon clapping his two hands together in exultation with horrible concussions, and exhibiting the most positive degree of friskiness in his gallantry towards his intended.

There was yet another whose spirits were forced on the occasion—and that was Ned Maxwell. He found himself the discarded lover of a girl whom he had affected to despise, and who, as I have said before, although so recently married, seemed, in assuming the title of wife, to have thrown off much of her embarrassment and silliness. The triumphant and self-complacent air of the major, the extraordinary kindness and civility with which he was treated by Jane's aunt, and indeed the perfect felicity of the whole group, not excepting Apperton himself, were too much for his nerves and spirits, especially as all his unceasing endea-

vours to get another sight of his beautiful vision had been unavailing — all this, added to the constant expectation of seeing the two Moss troopers arrive from the land of fens and fowl, full charged with provincial wit, and ready to raise a laugh against the defeated swain, made him appear as melancholy as his poor heart-worn sister really felt.

The day, however, passed over without the arrival of Moss and his brother; and the rein and a free course having been given to the little major, all further trouble, except listening to his incessant squeak, was abandoned. He described and redescribed, in the most animated colours, his palace at Florence, and his suite of rooms at Rome, the often-repeated delights of salad and macaroni, the splendid equipage, and servants, opera-box, and the Corso at one, and the crowd at his receptions at the other; the glories of the Sunday fireworks in the roofless theatres, the squeeze of visiters in his saloon, magnificent, superb, wonderful, with six pair of red stockings on the staircase, and a boudoir full of princes.

When this tiresome jargon ceased, and the tender adieus were over, and all the company gone, and all the lights out, poor Kate stole to her room, and throwing herself on a chair beside the fire, hid her face in her hands, and wept copiously. The whole flood of her sorrow burst from her burning eyes, and she involuntarily sought and found the bunch of shrivelled broken flowers, which poor Charles Somerford had plucked ten years before — sad emblem now of his own fate! Oh, that life could have been given to Charles by the sacrifice of hers — that she could see him once again — would she not give up years of existence? — and to think that she, in heart and soul a widow, should, within a little week, kneel before the sacred altar, and plight her faith and love to another — and such an one!

Now came too late the reflection that she had better have risked the negative displeasure of her father, and refused Apperton, than have linked herself for life with a being whom she could never fail to esteem, but whom she knew she never could love; for, strange as it may appear, now that her Charles was irretrievably gone, and that the remotest chance, the weakest ray of hope, was utterly ex-

tinguished by his death, she felt more remorse, and more agony of mind, at having suffered him to be supplanted (if not in her heart as he ought to have been), at least in her favour, than she even felt while he was yet alive, and might—but scarcely within the range of possibility—yet have claimed her as his own.

The hearts and feelings of women are so mysteriously constituted that it is impossible to account for their workings by any settled rule, or upon any fixed principle. Kate's sense of duty and firmness of resolution raised her above the dangers and difficulties of the conflict she had consented to submit to. She had, because she thought it right, obeyed the wishes of that father who had thwarted her and killed her hopes; but it was his to command, hers to obey: and reflecting upon the superiority of his judgment over hers, at the time of Somerford's departure, and arguing upon the blindness which ardent lovers suffer under, she reasoned herself into a measure, the horror of which never so fully glared upon her, as at the moment when she found herself liberated by the death of her early lover from any dread of afflicting him, and utterly deprived of every hope of his regaining her.

Thus agitated, thus distressed, Kate remained until late in the morning, when, exhausted by the very fatigue of sorrow, she fell asleep, and awoke to welcome the day, which, by seven, only, preceded that of her marriage with Apperton.

CHAPTER X.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven,
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio.
My father!—methinks I see my father. SHAKSPEARE.

"So, so, Master Neddums," said Godfrey Moss, as soon as he saw young Maxwell; "you see it has all come to pass—eh—the major has jockeyed you—eh—didn't I tell you so?"

"You did—and I believed you—and I care nothing about it," said Edward.

"Come, come, none o' your trash, Master Ned—won't do," said Moss. "How came you to go writing your crinkum-crankum love stuff to the cretur the very day she ran off, if you didn't want to marry her?"

"I wrote under a wrong impression," said Edward.

"Yes, that you did," replied Moss; "you wrote under the impression that she would have you—not she. I knew when that little squeaking chap got down there, with his stiff neckcloth, and his little foot, and all that jigamaree stuff, you had no more chance than a cat in a certain hot place without claws—no more than I should have had; but I say, Ned, never mind she—have you heard about poor Charley Somerford?"

"I have," said Edward; "how did you hear any thing about it?"

"Your father told *me* he had heard of his death," said Moss: "does Kittums know it?"

"Yes, poor girl, she does," said Edward. "I was too young when he left England to remember much of him myself, and, of course, I can only judge of him as a child; yet I remember I was very fond of him: but, for Heaven's sake, don't say a word upon the subject, for my father does not know that Kate has heard any thing about it—she told *me*, and so did my father, but the best thing to do is to take no notice one way or another."

"And so, Friday she is to be married," said Moss, taking one of his double-allowance pinches of snuff; "well, as folks bake, so they must brew, but, if happiness comes out o' that—why,"—(another pinch)—"no matter—eh, Neddums, what's done can't be undone; and as the thing was to be, I am not quite sure that the young soldier chap's dying isn't the better for Kate."

Moss was one of the most agreeable companions possible, but posted as he was, during this conversation, at the luncheon table, clearing the decanters of the several remnants of wine which lingered in their lower parts, his adhesiveness was remarkable, and Edward never felt his prolixity so powerfully, as at the present moment, he being

all anxiety to "go his rounds" of the metropolis, in search of, or rather in the vague hope of meeting, her whom he considered the arbitress of his fate, and to whom he was attracted by an irresistible power; it was, therefore, with infinite and indescribable delight that he beheld his old friend finish the last drop of the last bottle, well knowing that so soon as he had concluded his self-imposed taste of *draining*—learnt, perhaps, in Lincolnshire—he would rise as well as he could from his easy chair—shake the snuff out of the wrinkles of his coat—borrow Ned's arm, and roll himself along into the front drawing-room, where, having first disposed his legs upon a sofa, his snuff-box deposited with a book on a small table beside it, he would make his Kittums, as he called her, play him some of those airs, which, as he used to say, reminded him of foregone times—for Godfrey had been a winner of hearts in his day, and, with all his outward contempt for sentiment and feeling, a tear would sometimes stand in his eye, when he, for a moment, recurred to the events of his youth.

To this post having accordingly conveyed him, Edward hastened forth upon his daily pilgrimage. The legal cellars of Mr. Diveandpore were now wholly and entirely neglected; and exactly at the moment when the main stay of his idleness was cut by the marriage of his wealthy cousin, the young gentleman abandoned himself completely to the *belle passion*, and the pursuit of a phantom, which it seemed perfectly impossible he ever could grasp.

There are frequently presentiments and forebodings in the mind, which come to be verified under the most extraordinary circumstances. Edward Maxwell, who had never seen his incognita since the day after the arrival of the Overalls, when she caught his eye as he was handing the bride of his rival into his father's carriage, felt when he left home a sort of assurance that he should see her in the course of this morning's "patrol." The day was fine, the sky (for London) clear, the streets were thronged with lovely women, whose eyes sparkled with vivacity and intelligence, and whose cheeks glowed with English health and beauty. There was a fresh air, and all nature seemed in activity. That most splendid of European streets, the

pride of our metropolis, Regent Street, was crowded with carriages and pedestrians, and Maxwell was borne, as it were, upon the tide of people which flowed towards the Quadrant. Here, searching in every direction the beloved object of his hopes, he crossed, and proceeded by Sackville Street into Piccadilly, along which great thoroughfare he continued his walk, associating in his mind the Green Park basin with the mysterious lady. It was there he had last spoken to her — he might possibly see her there again — in short, fate or some other power, quite incomprehensible by me, induced the love-stricken youth to wend his way in that direction.

The sudden fulfilment of an anticipation of this sort has a most extraordinary effect upon the mind; and it sometimes appears, when events happen in this manner, that they have actually occurred to one previously. I apprehend that I shall not be able to make the reader at all comprehend my meaning — perhaps the feeling I should wish to describe is peculiar to myself, and therefore I give it up. Suffice it to say, that the effect the appearance of the young lady herself, walking slowly by the side of the Green Park basin, produced upon Edward was something almost magical. He could scarcely trust the evidence of his senses. However, beyond a doubt, there she actually was. Now, had she come thither, as he had, because they met there once before? — She stopped — looked round, and was evidently waiting for somebody.

This show of assignation, as it seemed to Edward, immediately altered the course of his proceedings. He resolved not to exhibit himself suddenly to her eye — but to watch *her* movements — see if some more favoured swain joined her — and, whether such were the case or not, and she retired from the ground alone, to follow and trace her to her residence — a measure which, if not entirely consistent with good breeding, after his promise to the young lady herself, was considerably qualified, if not thoroughly warranted, by the *escapade* she had played off upon him at Charing Cross.

In order to effect his purpose with the greater security, the young general posted himself in the fruiterer's shop,

between Clarges and Half-moon Street; and, like a sharp-shooter, hiding himself among the leaves and baskets of Messrs. Levy and Salmon, lay snugly watching the movements of the enemy in the field.

As his ambuscade is likely to last for some time, we will leave him in it, while we dispose of the Overalls and Mrs. Epsworth, to whose hotel Kate had gone after breakfast, for the purpose of seeing them start on their continental expedition.

The truth is, that the negative affection which Miss Maxwell had hitherto felt for her relation, Jane, had in the short space of four-and-twenty hours become nearly positive. The cause of this sudden change of temperature the reader will, perhaps, find in the kind sympathy which Jane expressed for Kate, while relating to her the details which had reached her, respecting poor Somerford's death. There was so much of good intention and good feeling in Miss Epsworth's conduct on the occasion, that Kate almost loved her for it; and, independently of the desire to see again and take leave of her cousin, Miss Maxwell could not help fearing that she had not made her gratitude to Jane sufficiently evident. These were some of the motives which carried the young lady from home immediately after breakfast; the others were indescribable, but, perhaps, intelligible to those who have fondly loved, and eternally lost the dear object of their affections.

Kate was in excellent time: the ponderous travelling carriage, yet horseless, stood before the door, and the major's valet, conjointly with sundry waiters, were loading and cramming every available hole and corner of it with the different necessaries of life, while Miss Scrimshaw stood on the steps of the hotel, affecting to shiver with cold, holding two very small parcels of her lady's movables, about the secure stowage of which she was, or seemed to be, most particularly anxious.

Mrs. Epsworth, whose constitution was delicate, and could not bear London air, (as the atmosphere of that foggy, smoky metropolis, is generally but erroneously called,) had made several desperate attempts upon her new connection's good-nature, in hopes of being invited to join

the happy couple in their continental tour ; but the major, polite as he was, and anxious always to meet the wishes of the " charming, magnificent, delightful, elegant, delishos crechurs," with whom he might be thrown in contact, was now married to Jane, and although she never spoke upon the subject of her " aunt's " going with them, her " aunt " had spoken of it to her, all of which the major knew as well as aunt or Jane themselves ; but his mind was made up ; a plump lady, as third, in a travelling chariot on a tour, is clearly *de trop*. Overall thought, with the immortal deer-stealer of Stratford, that she would

" Their *quietus* make *as* a bare *bodkin ;*"

and had therefore resolved that on no account should her joining the party be permitted or allowed. And the major, who was a man of the world, was right ; for after the inconveniences of close packing, and travelling in a mash, had been overcome, and they were comfortably settled down in their home, still the aunt would have been *de trop*. Nothing makes more mischief, or causes greater inconvenience in a *menage*, than a mother or aunt living with her married daughter or niece : she seems established in the house as a sort of equity judge, to defend the rights of the wife against the encroachments of the husband, and out of it she is considered as a domestic encumbrance, a necessary evil, who must be invited every where with her young relations. Besides, Mrs. Epsworth was a scion of the old school : the wealth which had descended to her niece had been accumulated by her husband as a merchant, and he having married young, married according to the circumstances of his youth, so that excellent as was her heart, and delicate as was her constitution, she would have made but a sad figure amongst the princes and princesses who were Overall's intimate friends on the Continent ; and although she possessed all the cardinal virtues, she would have looked uncommonly odd in a flirtation with an eminent pair of red stockings on a staircase.

Jane was of the next generation, and she knew everything,—French and Italian were her ordinary mediums of

conversation; in German, she was a proficient, and as for accomplishments, she was actually finished, from the writing of epic poems, down to the commission of that lowest debasement of human intellect, called "oriental tinting," in the fulfilment of which, a great grown-up woman sits down at a table, and stumps brushes through holes cut in cards, and so makes up "pictchurs," as she calls them, of birds and flowers in all their natural colours, and fancies herself an artist and a genius.

Kate arrived in the breakfast room at the hotel, just as poor Mrs. Epsworth had given up the last hope; and Kate, who was anxious to know, since she was aware of the manœuvring upon the point, how the affair was settled, endeavoured to blunt the pangs of separation from her niece and of disappointment of foreign travel, by begging her, after Jane and the major were gone, to come to Burlington Gardens, where she would be most welcome as long as she chose to stay with them.

This invitation was not *quite* sincere. What invitations are? — for although Miss Maxwell had a great and natural regard for Mrs. Epsworth, still she was not an entirely suitable companion for her: but the truth is, that Kate's mind was so overburthened with sorrow, care, hope, fear, apprehension, and a thousand other feelings, that she thought, independently of doing a good-natured thing, by asking Mrs. Epsworth to her father's house, she should bring into the circle something new, — some object to divert attention and attract the conversation from herself; for when Mousetrap was their inmate, it was necessary that he should have some mental food to exist upon: and although the gentle Kitty never designed to provide a butt for his shafts, in establishing Mrs. Epsworth in his neighbourhood, she felt no disinclination to use her as a shield, from which some of Godfrey's satirical darts might glance — at all events, she gave the old gentlewoman the invitation.

This was the critical moment — it had certainly seemed, up to this period, more than doubtful whether she was to go with the young couple or not — all her *things* were packed up, and she was quite aware of the principle of

leaving England light, in order to buy bargains abroad. Till this moment she had fancied, although the major had received all the suggestions about her going with a *visage du bois*, that he was getting up a little gallant agreeable surprise, and she should find herself suddenly included in the party: but when this invitation was given, and the major said, "I'm sure, ma'am, were I you, I should rejoice in accepting Miss Maxwell's offer — a charming house at all times to go to, delightful, pleasant, sociable, nice, and now, just after our departure, so much more agreeable than returning to the country by yourself — Jove!"

The die was cast — her fate was sealed; a pull at the pin of the guillotine never more decidedly cut short mortal man than did this little speech cut short the hopes of the good-natured, common-place Mrs. Epsworth. She thought it rude, but recollected in a moment that the major owed her no favour, that he had carried off her niece to marry her, and that his not increasing his love after the ceremony, was merely a fair return for her former want of courtesy or consideration towards him; although it should never be forgotten, that it was more than suspected at the time, that this worthy old gentlewoman, compelled as she was to make a show of opposition to the major's advances upon Jane, in fact, very much sympathised with her niece in her preference for that distinguished officer to her cousin, Mr. Edward Maxwell.

Be that as it may, Mrs. Epsworth gladly accepted the kind bidding of Kate, who would have got through the affair with comfort to herself, had not the major, during the absence of his wife and aunt-in-law, chosen to let the poor girl into the whole secret of his being acquainted with the history of her first love, and even more, that he had himself been personally intimate with Charles Somerford.

The sound of that name, pronounced in a high tone and with a sort of sacrilegious flippancy, as Kate felt it, overcame her.

"Jane never told me that you knew him," said Kate, her eyes filled with tears.

"She didn't know till this morning that I did," said the major: "it was in 1820 — I was then in Calcutta.

Hot furnace — melting — bungalows — burning — blazing — tremendous — he was stationed in Fort William — nice fellow — excellent — good — agreeable."

"And," said Kate, scarcely knowing what she said, — "he was then in good health?"

"Perfect — perfect," cried the major; "perfect — firm as a farmer; but that's five years ago, and it takes less than that, with some people, to upset a constitution: the climate is fine up the country. I recollect he was a great favourite — pale — genteel — nice fellow — always melancholy — sad — sighing — heigh ho!"

"Poor Charles!" said Kate, unconscious of the sharp and vivid description the major was giving.

"He made his way prodigiously," continued his eulogist, "wonderfully — at head quarters — got upon the staff, and was in high favour with the commander of the forces."

"Ah, Major Overall," said Kate, "I have no doubt of his good qualities."

"The good qualities you speak of, I am sure he possessed," said the major; "but for none of those was he indebted to his sudden elevation: it was his carving — his carving that did it — capital carver — excellent — dexterous — no accomplishment more important. See a man stabbing a roasted duck in a hundred places, while the smoking bird flies about in the gravy to elude his fork! horrid — low — vulgar; it was his skill that way, exhibited one day at the mess, that won the heart of the general, who happened to be dining with us; curious — odd — singular."

All this seemed nonsense, and barbarous nonsense, to the astonished and wounded ears of Kate, who had expected, as the tribute of friendship, some high eulogy on the exalted virtues of her lost Charles, and whose feelings of anger, mortification, and sorrow, when she heard that the loved object of her hopes had cut his way to rank and preferment, not with his sword, but with a carving-knife, are quite beyond description. She decided in a moment that the major was speaking falsely, — but she was deceived, for such was actually the fact; although perhaps the major

would have done as well to have left the foundation of his friend's fortune concealed: he had, however, yet not done his worst.

"However," continued he, for conscious that he would not have another opportunity of speaking to Kate upon the interesting subject for a long time, and really having in his heart the wish to soothe and console her,—"however, for *my* part, I disbelieve the account of his death."

"Do you?" cried Kate; "why, Major Overall?"

"All that has been officially heard about it is, that he was dying when the last ships left the Cape of Good Hope, and that no expectations were entertained of his recovery; but," screamed the major, "while there's life there's hope."

"Hope," said Kate, "for whom?"

"Why, for young Somerford, and his friends," said Major Overall; "he *has* friends and relations, I suppose?"

The silence which followed induced the major, who carried on this conversation while marching and countermarching from one end of the drawing-room to the other, to turn towards Miss Maxwell, when he discovered that she had sunk backwards on the sofa senseless.

This alarmed the man of war, and assistance was speedily summoned; Jane, and her aunt, and the two maids, forthwith surrounded the poor girl as closely as possible in order to give her air, and the major rang the bell to order some hartshorn, which it was probable might arrive ten minutes after her recovery. But Kate was not a "fainting miss;" the pangs she had to struggle with were of no common order, and the last ray of hope that Charles still lived, at the moment when she had almost become reconciled to the belief of his death, and at a moment, too, when his existence ought not to be, and could not be, of the least importance to her future happiness, burst upon her so vividly, so dreadfully, and opened to her view such a lengthened vista of wretchedness and misery, that harassed nature could no longer support herself.

Removed to the adjoining room she gradually recovered, and imparted to Jane the cause of her sudden and violent illness, which was wholly attributable to the carelessness and flippancy of the major, who had, in the course of ten

minutes, become an object of such perfect abhorrence to Kate, that it was with difficulty she could induce herself to receive his adieus, and some consolatory apologies for his abruptness, when a squeeze of the hand from him, and a warm and fervent embrace from Jane, concluded the scene. Mrs. Epsworth, however, weeping bitterly at the departure of the bride and bridegroom, posted herself at the window to see them start, and, as the carriage drove off, thought proper — whether naturally or for effect, I cannot at present determine — to follow Miss Kate's example, and fall into a fainting fit.

In this, as there can be no doubt she will speedily recover from it, we will, with the reader's permission, leave her; and having seen the last of the Overalls, learnt the cause of Somerford's promotion, and thrown a little discredit upon the account of his death, now return to the fruit shop in Piccadilly, where we left Mr. Edward Maxwell playing bo-peep amongst the orange-baskets.

Nearly an hour had elapsed since Edward had first taken up his position, and he had eaten a considerable quantity of grapes, cracked a profusion of almonds, and even swallowed sundry oranges, in order to keep his temporary landlord in good humour, and supply him with suitable rent; still the delicate girl hovered about the same spot, until at length he began to think that *he* himself must be the object of *her* search, and that by a parity of reasoning with that, upon which he had acted, in visiting that part of the town, she had fancied his residence to be somewhere in the neighbourhood, and was now, in her own imagination, actually blockading him.

This idea once started, the fruiterer was paid, and Edward was proceeding to accost his beautiful friend, when, on turning round, he found she had a companion with her, who must have joined her exactly at the instant he had quitted his view of her, to put down his money on the counter of the shop. At all events, he could now follow, "and mark the road they took."

Accordingly, he proceeded across the street, keeping a little in their rear, before he entered the Park. She frequently turned her head, as if apprehensive of being dis-

covered: he adroitly evaded her eye, and gained the entrance at the lodge; here she again turned; and instead of venturing to follow the couple along the broad walk down to St. James's Park, where, if she had looked round again, she must have seen him, he stopped in the angle of the building, where he meant to remain until they had so far descended the hill, that he, by crossing the upper end of the basin, might keep them in a sort of parallel line with himself, along the pathway across the grass.

Here he was snug; but his fear of detection considerably increased, when he found that, instead of proceeding downwards, they were about to take another turn round the water — they hesitated at the corner near Lord Sefton's; and in the interval Edward shifted his quarters, and got out of the gate again into Piccadilly, and placed himself so as to command them where they could by no possibility see him, and yet where he would be close to them.

He watched their progress: the man, who appeared past the middle age, seemed in earnest conversation with her: he wore a blue cloak, which concealed his figure; but the actions of both were energetic: he lost sight of them until they turned; he then securely looked at them — there she was, blooming in all her wonted beauty and charms, with the same bright eyes and pearly teeth; but Edward Maxwell saw none of them. The man, her companion, fixed and engrossed his whole attention, and rivetted his look; he doubted, hesitated — gazed again, — but as they came closer to him, he was convinced — IT WAS HIS FATHER.

CHAPTER XI.

"With head up-raised, and look intent,
And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart
Like monument of Grecian art;
In list'ning mood she seemed to stand,
The guardian Naiad of *the Strand*."

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE surprise, the astonishment of Ned Maxwell, at the sudden appearance of his respected and respectable parent,

walking, with the greatest ease and familiarity, arm-in-arm, with the mysterious object of his search, were such that he was nigh discovering himself, by rushing from his concealment, across the very path they were pursuing. He, however, checked himself, and in a moment his mind was filled with ten thousand new feelings, new doubts, and new fears. He beheld his father, the intimate associate of this lovely young woman, who had evidently been waiting for him; he saw by her action and manner, not only that she was speaking on some interesting topic, but that she was labouring under a dread of discovery. His father, too, appeared to him to avert his face from the street as he passed the entrance, through which persons were going and coming more thickly; and, finally, he saw them take the unfrequented path across the turf, toward St. James's Park, by which, before he had ascertained who the "swain expected" was, he himself meant to watch the young lady's progress, and trace her to her home.

But when he saw his parent, the being to whom his duty and affection naturally belonged, the partner and associate of the lovely girl to whom he was devoted, he was paralysed —to follow or to observe was impossible. If his father's intentions were benevolent, his object good, what right had he to search or enquire into his actions?—on the contrary, if his father in his after life had, as many greater, wiser, and better men have done, become a captive to the charms and fascinations of youth and beauty, what right had he to interfere?—yet he felt sick at heart that he had seen them together, for now could he never separate them in his mind; he should meet his parent at dinner, and should hear the beautiful precepts of virtue and morality fall from his lips; he should hear him rail at the vices and follies of the world, but he should see in his mind's eye the bright vision by which he had been enchanted, and cease to respect the moral lessons of a preacher, whose conduct apparently so ill accorded with his precepts.

A young man more of the world than Edward would have laughed off the discovery, praised his father's good taste, envied him his good fortune, and (as has been the case) discussed with him the charms of the mistress he had

been so lucky as to gain ; but no, the event of the morning was a dagger in young Maxwell's heart. Whatever might happen, it separated him from the dear object of his romantic hopes and wishes — yet — she might be some young lady whose family his father might professionally attend, and whom of course *he* need not know — but no, that could not be — this girl, lovely and graceful as she was, was alone, unattended by a servant — waiting, too, in what amongst the middling classes of society is acknowledged as a place of assignation, one *grade* higher than Harewood Place, and two grades lower than Kensington Gardens ; besides, her acquaintance with the thief-taker, her subtle flight through the inn-yard, these were strong proofs of her inferiority of station, although neither her person, nor her manner, nor her conversation, bespoke it.

At all events, Edward saw the impossibility of following them — he could not securely do so in the open space, since the lovely fair one kept constantly looking round ; but in truth it was not the physical difficulty that hindered him ; it was principle that checked him — the idea of watching his parent, perhaps to establish his indiscretion, was repugnant to his feelings, and he stood gazing on the, to him, " interesting" couple, till the undulation of the ground concealed them from his view — when they disappeared — all around him seemed darkness, he shuddered, trembled, and unconsciously retraced his way homewards.

Kate, meanwhile, had returned to Burlington Gardens with her new visiter, who, although she had consented to go there, rather than seem quite deserted, felt conscious that her presence, considering all things, could not be particularly agreeable either to Edward Maxwell or his father. Godfrey Moss had seen very little of the old lady, but he had seen enough to make him hate her ; which feeling, superadded to his sovereign contempt for Major Overall, promised any thing but a pleasant time for the dowager, as far as he was concerned. Indeed, taking all the circumstances into consideration, a more gloomy prospect never could have been prepared for half a dozen good sort of, good-natured, good-tempered people.

Six o'clock at length arrived, and the party began to

assemble. Apperton brought a city friend; Mrs. Epsworth came down with Kate; Moss grunted in a corner when he saw her approach, and the words "poor old cretur" escaped his lips unconsciously. Edward presented himself —one thought it was cold, another said it was not quite so cold as it had been the day before, Kate considered it fine weather for the time of year; Mrs. Epsworth thought the days seemed shorter in London than in the country; Mr. Apperton's city friend ventured to suggest that the smoke in London made a considerable difference in the light. Edward asked if there were any news, Apperton told him the price of three per cent. consols, and Godfrey Moss entreated Kittums to order dinner, and not wait for her father—Moss being of opinion that, where his appetite was concerned, the master of the house was a very unimportant personage.

At length, however, Maxwell himself appeared, apologising for his lateness, as he had been unexpectedly detained.

It is scarcely possible to explain the state of Edward's feelings when he saw his father, as usual, placid, mild, almost venerable in his appearance, making his excuses for professional delays—the Green Park and the beauty were in an instant before the young man's eyes, and thence taking a retrospect of all the delays for which his respected parent had in like manner been in the habit of apologising for the last six or seven years, he came to a decision somewhat more creditable to Mr. Maxwell's gallantry than to his respectability; but this decision could not fail to be painful in an eminent degree.

At dinner he watched every word and action of the old gentleman's—when he saw his hand extended to raise his glass to his lips, the recollection that the hand of the beautiful unknown had been pressed by it, but a few hours before, flashed into his mind, and when he heard his sire lamenting the depravity of some libertine, who added to his other crimes the dangerous one of duplicity, by which, under the guise of friendship, and even morality, he rendered the destruction of his victims more secure, he nearly laughed aloud; and yet he wondered at the still placid de-

portment of his parent, and the ease with which he maintained a precisely similar conduct to that which he had ever adopted in the bosom of his family; a wonder, which, however, was gradually modified, as his son began to believe that the gaiety in which he had that day accidentally detected him was neither new or extraordinary.

"I hope, Mr. Moss," said Mrs. Epsworth, wishing at the earliest opportunity to conciliate, if possible, that terrible man,—"I hope you will come some day and see me at Dulham."

"Whenever I have committed any crime which the law creturs shall think fit to punish very severely, ma'am, I will," said Moss. "No, no, none o' your country houses for me."

"I thought, Moss," said Maxwell, "you were a great admirer of the social parties at Lord Belford's, and the Christmas festivities at——"

"Pshaw, Mack!" interrupted Moss, "so I am. I like a handful of London put down in a house full of luxury and comfort, with just as much rurality as you please, and no more; and that in a space sufficient to let every man do as he likes; or give me a tree on a grass plot with a table under it, where one may smoke a cigar, and drink the ginnums and water, without offending any of your fine folks; either one thing or the other, but not such a place as that old body's."

Apperton's city friend stared.

"Why, Mr. Moss," said Mrs. Epsworth, twisting herself into a thousand contortions of face and body to seem good-natured, "I'm sure you can't judge of Dulham House, for you have never been there."

"No, ma'am, but I know them as has," said Moss.

Apperton's friend whispered "vulgar" to Apperton.

"And," continued he, "I'm told yours is what is called a regular family: breakfast at nine, and wait till every body's down before you begin; dine at five, to which I have no objection, and after tea, talk conversation, or play shilling whist till ten, and then go to bed again."

"A very rational style of living, too," said Kate.

"What, without a cigar, and a drop of sommut nice

and warm?" said Moss. "No, no,—no go—however, I *doos* 'em even in such places as them, ma'am: I make myself uncommonly agreeable to the housemaids, and so secure my groggums in my bed-room, while I sit and smoke my cigar out of the window, if it is hot weather, or up him chimley if it is cold."

"But what does your servant think of your proceedings?" said Maxwell.

"Servant!" said Moss, "as if I ever travelled with a servant; no, ma'am," continued he, addressing Mrs. Epsworth, "you'll never be pestered with a servant if *I* come to see you—one razor and a brush wrapped up in a bit of an old newspaper does my toilet; I'm not over nice."

"Is he mad?" whispered Apperton's friend.

"No—only oddish," replied the stockbroker.

"And then, ma'am, don't send one of the maids into my room in the morning by daybreak to light my fire," said Godfrey, "rushing in like a fiend, stumping and thumping every thing about, as all them serving creturs do, on purpose to show their independence."

"You shall do exactly as you like, Mr. Moss," said Mrs. Epsworth, "and have every thing your own way."

"Well, we'll see, ma'am," said Moss. "I can't promise; to be sure now, the young lady with her 'Ah, perdona,' or whatever you call the thing, she used to try to sing poor body, and that squeaking little cretur she has married are gone; it may be pleasant for a day or two."

"Come, Moss, — come, pass the bottle," said Maxwell, who evidently saw that an attempt to qualify his rudeness to poor Mrs. Epsworth would only be adding fuel to the flame, and who hoped, by circulating the wine, to get the conversation into another current.

"Well!" said Apperton's friend to himself, shrugging up his shoulders.

"I see," whispered the stockbroker to his friend, "you are not quite familiar with the transactions of this house: we are as lively here as in 'Change Alley."

"But with always a *bear* account, I should think," said his friend.

"Not so," said Apperton. "Moss is a shade or two

better or worse, according to the fluctuation, but sometimes he is quite at a premium."

"I'll bet a hat," said his friend, "that that man never *can* be pleasant."

"Done," said Apperton.

Edward, who had listened to this give-and-take dialogue, almost unconsciously, for his eyes were constantly fixed on his father, was both edified and amused by its termination; for, although so nearly allied, as he would shortly be, with a city-man, he had never before heard of a bet of the nature now proposed, and did not know that hats are the circulating medium in the sporting world, east of Temple Bar.

"What a lovely day we have had," said Maxwell, who had arrived too late to join the meteorological debate which occurred before dinner.

"Lovely," said Kate: "Mrs. Epsworth and I walked for nearly two hours in the Park."

"Which park?" said Maxwell, with unusual quickness.

Edward watched his countenance during the answer.

"Hyde Park," replied Kate, "and thence through the Green Park, to the gate opposite Clarges Street."

Not a muscle of his countenance was moved.

"What time was that?" said Maxwell.

"About three, I should think," said Mrs. Epsworth.

"*I* was in the Green Park, about three," said the elder Maxwell.

Edward would have given the world to speak, to ask one question, but consciousness, and the dread of his father's knowing that he had discovered his affair, kept him silent.

"What! *you* taking pleasure, papa?" said Kate.

"I was, I assure you," said her father, "and walked on till I found myself—having passed through the Park — on the other side of Westminster Bridge."

"Did the carriage follow you?" said Kate.

"No, my love," said Maxwell: "the coachman was not very well this morning, and so I thought I would give him a little rest, and I did what I had to do on foot."

"But what took you over Westminster Bridge, sir?" said Apperton.

Edward loved him for asking the question, which he himself would have given the world to put.

"I had a call to make, Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell, in a good-humoured tone, but with a manner implying,—"What is *that* to you?"

Edward was confounded. The easy, unmoved, unshaken readiness with which the old gentleman repelled every advance, and baffled every attack, astonished him; but it more and more distressed him; for he became persuaded that his respected parent was habituated to this sort of deception, and that nine times out of ten when he put on the same sort of decisive smile, and stopped further enquiry, by implying that the call he had to make was professional, he had in fact been devoting himself to some fair creature like her, who had been the partner of his walk that very morning.

All this struck deeply into Edward's heart. The debasement of his father in his estimation, by such a display of duplicity, was painful enough of itself; but when he recollected that, in order to establish his father's impropriety and hypocrisy, his lovely companion must be degraded too, the wound was doubly severe: for a second time had he been wakened from his dream of love and happiness; the first discovery, however, that she was not the writer of the letter from the Golden Cross, restored him to peace and comfort; but the second left no hope; for if there were no necessity for concealment, or if the young lady were a presentable person, or one who could be named in decent society, of course his father would have had no objection to mention that he had a companion in his morning's ramble, or that he had met a young lady, or indeed any part of the transaction; but, on the contrary, having ascertained that his daughter and her friend did not see him, he admits the walk, but carefully conceals every other part of the adventure; crosses Westminster Bridge before he knows where he is, and yet has a call to make when he gets there.

And then the affected humanity and good feeling towards the poor coachman, of whose illness not a word had been heard until this particular day, when the old gentleman thought rest good for the servant, and exercise good for

himself; and then Edward began to recollect the frequent absence of his father on professional business, during whole nights, and especially when he returned with boots covered with country mud, and would give no account of himself, although he did not get home until long after breakfast; in short, Ned was sadly plagued, and when the ladies retired, it was with difficulty he could maintain a conversation, to which his father, unconscious of his son's feelings, led with his usual gaiety, animation, and spirit, and wondered at the depression of the young gentleman, so evident to all the party.

"Have you been vision-hunting to-day, Ned?" said Maxwell.

This was rather too much—the father might have asked such a question, but from a rival, and that, as far as vision-hunting went, a successful one, it was too galling—he almost believed that his respectable parent knew that his morning companion was the vision itself.

"No," said Apperton, for Edward literally could not reply, "I rather think she has not deigned to appear of late—has she, Ned?"

"My dear fellow," said Edward, "spare me—there *are* points upon which jokes may be made, but I really do not think I deserve always to be selected as the subject of quizzing upon that particular one. I am young, and have at all events that privilege, at least, for being foolish."

"No foolery in being in love, Ned," said Moss; "we all have our time for it—every dog has his day, they say, and you and I, Mack, have had ours, haven't we?"

Yes, thought Edward, that you *have*, and have still.

"I wish you could once nail her," said Godfrey; "I should like to know who she is."

"Ah, there's no great chance of Ned's ever doing that," said Maxwell the elder; "the account he gives of the young lady convinces me, that he will never gain much by his acquaintance with *her*."

Edward was absolutely angry—he longed to proclaim his knowledge, and triumph over the foe—but that foe was his father, and he sat and writhed under the agony of thwarted affection, and injured pride, heightened by the

irritating application of Moss's irony, and Apperton's matter of fact. All this, however, he bore for half an hour, when at length, and after a good deal of preparatory fidgeting, he made his escape to the ladies.

The peculiar circumstances of his peculiarly romantic affair were then detailed for the enlightenment of Apperton's city friend, who volunteered another bet of a hat, that the flickering fair one was an impostor; during the whole of which discussion, the elder Maxwell argued, and reasoned, and, in short, said so much about it, that it was clear he could know nothing, and that whatever might have been the circumstances, which had so curiously thrown the young lady herself into his society, and apparently under his protection in the morning, he was utterly and entirely ignorant of her being the object of his romantic son's arduous search and ardent admiration.

Edward, however, appeared no more that night: in any other imaginable case, Kate, his kind, his excellent sister Kate, would have been his confidant and counsellor; but on this matter she could not be spoken to—never was young gentleman more worried or perplexed; for although, if his father spoke sincerely, as to the direction in which he walked from the Green Park, he had obtained something like a clue (rather slender to be sure) to the direction of the young lady's residence, still the very fact of her acquaintance with the old gentleman put an end at once to his wish of discovering where she lived, or who she was—and yet—perhaps if he could see, and speak to her again, and lead her to the subject, and mention his father's name to her, he might judge from the effect produced upon her of the nature of their acquaintance: for now, he very wisely resolved, if he met her the next day, not to tell her whom *he* himself was; and very naturally congratulated himself upon the accidental interruption which cut him short, in his last walk with her, just at the very moment he was on the point of disclosing all, the particulars of his family, residence, &c.

Edward's favourite scheme at the moment was to leave London in the morning: he literally dreaded to encounter his father—it was perhaps a strange reluctance, but I

believe a natural one — he could not hide his feelings — he could not speak freely — he could not affect respectfulness — what could he *do ?* He was aware that it would be foolish to quit town for so short a time as he could be absent; since three days only intervened between that morning and his sister's wedding day; a circumstance which of itself might account for the visible depression of that young lady's spirits, who seemed to prepare for her approach to the altar as an Indian's widow would make ready for a suttee. The absence of any thing like a flame, however, renders the simile somewhat imperfect.

It is the commonest possible observation, how extremely unpleasant it is to be in the society of two fond lovers — it is irksome in the extreme, for the poor creatures are unconscious of the exhibition they are making, and strive not to be particular, which renders the affair, if possible, even worse. To witnessing this, by way of amusement, watching two lumps of sugar melting in the bottom of a tea-cup is infinitely superior, especially when affairs are drawing towards a crisis — now at Maxwell's there was nothing of the sort to embarrass any body: the conversation and manner of Apperton and Kate were so calm, and so rational, that for all the visiters could know of the matter they might have been married half-a-dozen years before.

Apperton's jolly red and white face bore on it no mark of care, or love, or woe: he stood with his back to the fire joking with his city friend, every now and then clapping his hard hands together with a loud report, expressive, as it should seem, of happiness and independence; Kate sat working and talking to Mrs. Epsworth; while Moss in the corner was telling some uncommon good joke, evidently against the stranger of the day — the hat-better from 'Change Alley. Whist, however, was soon the order of the night; and when Apperton, Maxwell, and the stranger had cut for the lady, Mrs. Epsworth joined them, and commenced a rubber of longs — shorts being yet unknown at Dulham House.

Moss then wriggled and wheeled himself on his chair towards the piano-forte, to which he ordered his Kittums,

and there he fixed her, to play for his amusement; a huge tumbler of "sommut nice and warm," which he had (with a bit o' nutmeg a top on him) that evening instead of tea, because he warn't well, was set upon one of the candlestick places of the instrument, from which ever and anon he sipped, while he furnished a sort of prosaic running accompaniment to Miss Katherine's harmony, in which he poured forth the declaration of his bitter hatred of Mrs. Epsworth, and all her family, and his sovereign contempt for six-and-eightpenny Jack, as he had christened the civic friend of Miss Maxwell's betrothed.

This evening, however, with all its old associations, its little fooleries and tricks, was destined to be the last of its race. The two following days were to be devoted to the preparations for the marriage, and the trip to Brighton. Miss O'Connochie was to be one of the bride's maids, and she and Miss Fletcher, her fair colleague, were constantly in council with Kate and Mrs. Epsworth upon points of dress and etiquette; for amongst other absurdities observable in society, high, low, or middling, is this most pre-eminent one: — a girl is never on the point of marriage, but she forthwith proceeds to order dresses, and petticoats, and bodies, and slips, and cloaks, and gowns, and pelisses, and all other such articles, as if, during the period of her existence, prior to her entering the holy state of matrimony, she had never worn any clothes at all. To be married is, it is true, to join one's fate with another's: but serious and heavy as are the religious and moral obligations which the change may entail upon us, as far as all the physical part of the affair is concerned, surely a lady does not want more gowns and petticoats after she is married than she required before. By the system of bride-fitting, so universally adopted, people not reasoning upon this point would be inclined to think she did. Kate, however, was a rational, clear-sighted person: her object and desire were to avoid all show and bustle; and since, by a sort of tacit agreement, it had been settled that she *was* to be Mrs. Apperton, why, the quieter and simpler the proceeding which made her so the better.

Miss O'Connochie was violent for cake and gloves, and

Miss Fletcher was equally argumentative in the cause of favours, but Kate decided for neither; a decision highly approved of by the bridegroom, who admired her economy, and saw no good in wasting money in millinery and pastry.

In the midst of these preparations, Edward, the once gay and animated, appeared wretched and melancholy; Kate saw the depression of his spirits, and laid it to the account of his strange attachment, without, of course, guessing at the real nature of his sorrow and abstraction; it was chiefly his father whom he wished to avoid; the restraint which the sight he had seen imposed upon him in the old gentleman's presence, his grief at knowing what he did, and his anxiety to know more, the mixture of hope and apprehension, and the apparent impossibility of ever touching on the subject again, the respect due to a parent, which alike prevented his pursuing the object of his affections, and endeavouring to seek farther concerning her—altogether he was so completely beaten by circumstances that he evaded dining at home the two days previous to the "nuptial celebration," in order, not only to conceal his feelings, but to avoid the questions to which a change in his manner and spirits, of which he himself was perfectly conscious, would naturally expose him.

But fate had other trials in store for him; for when he least expected it, he again beheld his fair tormentor—this time, however, she was walking rapidly—as usual, unattended—and was hurrying through the crowd and bustle of Charing Cross, where, according to Doctor Johnson, runs "the full tide of human existence."

"This time," thought Edward, "she shall not escape me;" for, although it seemed decreed that their acquaintance was never to become more intimate than it was at the moment, still he would ascertain, if possible, her residence, and her name, in order to establish his father's morality, and restore him to his proper place in the respect and admiration of an affectionate son, from which the affair of the Green Park had so suddenly and so disagreeably hurried him. Accordingly, the young gentleman, at such a distance as ensured his safety from detection, followed the fair one until she crossed to the Strand; along the crowded

pavement did the sylph-like creature glide under the *surveillance* of her anxious follower, until she reached the coach-stand near Wellington Street: here she stopped, and having secured a coach, stepped into it; the direction whither to drive was given in a whisper to the waterman, and the vehicle drove off.

In an instant Edward was at the same waterman's side: a half-crown, slipped into his dirty hand, at the moment the question, "what that direction was," was asked, elicited a willing and immediate answer, "Tower Hill, sir."

In half a minute was the ardent swain enveloped in a fast and nasty hack cabriolet, and very shortly overtook the coach, which contained his lovely idol—once in its wake, anxiously did he check the aspiring courage of his driver, which would have led him to dash past the heavy "crawler;" but Edward bid his young ambition sleep, and charged him to keep where he was, in the rear of the carriage before them—so he did, and at the corner of that elevated space, oft moistened by the blood of traitors, did he, having extricated himself from the watch-box, on wheels, at the end of Thames Street, see the lovely fair one again tread the earth—she performed the unromantic task of paying the coachman, like any other common-place every-day woman, and then proceeded to the stairs, leading to the river.

It was one of the coldest days of early spring, it was getting latish in the afternoon, and this beautiful young creature was going to embark on the water; a measure which, independently of its being, as Edward thought, extremely perilous to her health and safety, was particularly disagreeable to him, as he did not exactly see how he could follow her down the stream without being discovered.

The expedition, at all events, demanded caution; and accordingly having seen her off, in a boat, rowed by a sculler, Edward having given her time enough to be out of eye-shot of *him*, stepped into another wherry with a pair of oars, and directed the watermen to pull across the river, so that *he* could command her little bark, while she, unconscious of being watched, would even, if amongst the numerous vessels passing and repassing she saw another boat gliding among the tiers of shipping at anchor, never

imagined that any body on board of it was intently regarding her progress, and, of course, would take no steps to elude the vigilance of his search.

Away went the wherries, at their relative distances, for a considerable time, until Edward felt extremely cold, and the evening began to draw in; at length, however, the crisis of his fate approached; the boat bearing the lady neared a good sized merchant ship, distinguished amongst her neighbours for cleanness of appearance, the tautness of her masts, and the squareness of her yards: the waterman who rowed the lady gave two or three sharp concluding pulls, took in his sculls; and as the wherry had just way enough to bring her under the bow of the ship, caught the rope which was handed to him from the forecastle, and hauled up alongside in a most seaman-like manner.

In another minute "the chair" (half a cask wrapped up in a dirty red ensign) was seen descending into the boat, and before a third had elapsed the fair vision was "whipped up handsomely," and received at the gangway by the master of the ship, who immediately released her from her bunting bondage, with all the gallantry of a thoroughbred true blue schipper.

"What ship is that?" said Edward to the waterman, as he saw, with the most unqualified surprise, the flight of his beloved.

"Can't say, sir," said the waterman:—"she looks like a Yankee, I think."

"Ay, ay," said his partner, "so she be—'Merricay built. She's the ship vot come up to them moorings in January last; don't you recollect that Mounsheer chap as we brought up from her with the trunks, what was stopped at the Custom House about the *sea*-gars?"

"Ah, so she is," replied the other: "I think they call her the 'Villelmeney.' She belongs here to Lunnun river," a name invariably given by jolly tars all over the world to the pride of our country, "the silver Thames."

Having thus housed, or rather shipped, the lady, Edward was rather puzzled what next to do: he ordered his rowers to lay to, for a minute or two; but when he saw the boat which had borne his idol to the Villelmeney (which the

reader may perhaps anticipate was the Wilhelmina) returning up the river, having left her on board, his confusion became worse confounded—who was she—what could she be—did she live in a ship—was she the wife or daughter of the master,—was she going away in the ship?—how could his father have become acquainted with her?

In the midst of this perplexity the returning waterman neared them, and Edward gave the men directions to come up with him, and ask whether the lady was going to stop on board.

They did ask, and the answer received was, "No: she was a going ashore with the captain in *his* boat, vich was the reason he varnt vanted no more."

It was now getting rather duskish, and had already gotten very cold, and the young Londoner was extremely chilly, and felt extremely awkward as to the instructions he should give his watermen: at length, the fog and the darkness coming on, and there being no appearance of the young lady, he resolved upon landing at the stairs nearest the ship, to which, of course, the captain would bring her; seeing that he thought waiting about on land preferable to being afloat at that time of the day, and that season of the year; and, accordingly, consulting his rowers as to the most usual landing place for persons coming from ships in the position of the Wilhelmina, he was pulled to the *chaussé*, and, after paying the waterman, took up his position on a little sort of terrace at the head of the stairs, where he commanded a full view of the vessel, which was now more distinguishable by a light in her cabin-window, and a fire in her caboose, than by any other mark or feature.

Here did the patient sufferer walk up and down until eight o'clock: hungry he was not; for the anxiety of his heart destroyed, or rather superseded, appetite, but very uncomfortable he *was;* his feet were cold and wet, a kind of chilling mist hanging on his whiskers, and a sort of incipient tooth-ache assailing the right side of his face, when one of the habitual idlers of a landing place, who had been watching his patient progress up and down for some time, ventured, half from civility, and half from curiosity, to ask him if he was waiting for any body.

"Why," said Edward, "yes—that is to say—no—I think I expect a boat from the Wilhelmina, that handsome looking ship there—the captain's boat—I—that is—eh?"

"No, sir," said the man, "I don't think there'll be any boat from her to-night; besides, the cappun' never comes ashore this here side, he lives somewhere about Bermonsey, and always lands the other side the water. I think his boat pulled ashore more than an hour ago, didn't it, Bill?"

"Ah, a precious sight more than that," said his companion, who was contentedly smoking a pipe, which he removed from his mouth, just to let that information and a curling volume of smoke escape at the same moment. This was by no means an agreeable announcement to Ned Maxwell, who, however, was not sorry to hear the fact, as it rendered his further stay at that time needless; and, truth to be told, the temperature of the night was just then getting considerably below love heat; so he reconciled himself to the disappointment, by the reflection that his staying out in the cold any longer was useless, and accordingly resolved to make the best of his way towards the civilised world, and pay his new friend, the Wilhelmina, a visit the next day.

"Pray," said Edward to his first informant, "do you happen to know whether the captain of the ship is married?"

"Yes he be, sir," said the man; "I knows that, from going off with different people from the stairs; he has got a wife, and she's a good deal on board with him."

"Do you recollect," said Edward, sharpening the fellow's memory with a shilling—"do you happen to recollect what sort of person his wife is?"

"Uncommon nice little woman as ever trod shoe-leather," said the man. "I tell you who she's like, Bill," continued he, addressing his messmate. "She's just sich another as Poll Button, at Redriff; just her make and shape for the life of it—she's uncommon pretty."

"And how does she generally dress?" said Maxwell, "smart, or ——"

"Smart, indeed, I believe you," said the waterman; "only just now they are in mourning; so you see, on account o' that, sir, she can't make herself over fine."

In mourning—and beautiful—although compared to Poll Button, it must be the captain's wife; but then his father, how should he know any thing of a Bermondsey schipper's better half.

"And pray," said Edward, "what is the name of the captain?"

"Randolph, I think they call him," said the man: "I takes it he's a bit of a Yankee born himself, but I'm sure I can't rightly say, because, as how, I don't know, not for certain."

"Randolph," said Edward, who, sceptical as he was as to his father's knowledge of such people, had gained much information, and not wishing to be ungrateful, bestowed his bounty upon his informant's friend Bill, telling him to go and drink the king's health.

"That I will, your honour," said Bill: "I sarved him and his father two-and-forty years, and I only wish I had two-and-forty years more wear and tear in me, and that George the Fourth might live to wear me out."

"He's a right good 'un, is Bill," said the other sailor, in a half whisper to Edward, growing familiar by dint of encouragement.

"Well, good night, my fine fellows," said Edward: "you know you need not say that I have asked any of these questions."

"Mum's the word," said Bill, shaking out the ashes of his pipe on the head of a post at the top of the stairs. "I can guess what you are up to,—if I can't, I'm ——— but no matter for that,— close as wax — a fish swims deep, and says nothing to nobody. She *is* a pretty woman, your honour, and that's the truth on't."

"And uncommon like Poll Button, I will persist," said the other.

"But now," said Edward, "I am going to the west end of the town, which is my way?"

"Are you going as far as the Tower, sir?" said Bill, who seemed to think that fortress the *ultima Thulé* of elegance and fashion.

"Oh, very far beyond it, indeed," said Edward.

"Well, but howsomever," observed the other, "if so be

the gemman is a going further to the vestard, the Tower will be a liklish pint to take a fresh departure from. Now, sir, come along wi' me, I'll put you in the right road, and if you want a cast off to the Villylmeny any time o' day, or night either, Bill and I's the boys who'll give it you, your honour — ah — all free gratis, for nothing."

"Good-night, your honour," said Bill; "he'll show you the right way, sir; he's an uncommon good land pilot, whatever he may be on the river."

"Now, sir," said the waterman, "this here's Broad Street, that ere's Cock Hill, just you keep your face up that way, and follow your nose, and you are sure to fetch the Tower right a-head o' you."

"Thank you, my good fellow," said Edward, and, overwhelmed as he was, with confusion at the history he had heard of Mrs. Randolph, he proceeded with all due speed on his homeward voyage. Accordingly, he shaped his passage through Cock Hill and Shadwell, to Ratcliffe Highway, and having walked until he was nearly exhausted, enquired his distance from the Royal Exchange, which being a standard created in his mind as indicative of the city, and of some place where he could, perhaps, get something like dinner, struck him first, and received for answer that the person whom he asked didn't exactly know how far he was from the Royal Exchange, but that he was about a mile from the Tower.

To the eastward of the Tower, at nearly nine o'clock, in a cold foggy evening too, no vestige of a hackney coach, and nothing to reflect upon, but the discomfiture of his scheme, and the mysterious disappearance of his lovely vision, and all this too upon an empty stomach, which, although appetite still did not afflict him, affected him in the way of exhaustion, under the fatigue of mind and body, which, for the last four or five hours he had undergone; at length the well known turrets of the white tower were in sight, the broad ditch, the trees, the Trinity House in the distance, all spoke the vicinity of a coach-stand; and accordingly wearied out with watching and wailing, the distracted Ned was buttoned up in a convenient hack, and forthwith ordered the coachman to drive to a tavern at the

west end of the town, where he could re-invigorate himself, without encountering the inmates of his father's house, amongst whom, as must be evident, his father himself was to him decidedly the most formidable under all the circumstances.

In the mean time his absence from home had created various surmises and many observations; but Kate felt no uneasiness at his continued absence, because, as she told her father, she attributed it to the presence of Mrs. Epsworth, which although, perhaps in itself, not enough to keep him from the family circle, was rendered by Moss and his jokes extremely embarrassing, and even unpleasant to him. To speak to Moss on the subject would have been to ensure double the number of jests and allusions, so that altogether, Maxwell himself, who loved quiet and tranquillity, and who had not of course the remotest idea of the real cause of his son's defection, bore his absence patiently.

Edward, unlike himself, did not return home until the family were gone to rest. One day only now intervened between the marriage of his sister, upon which occasion his attendance would be of course essential, and, therefore, he resolved to devote the morrow to the discovery of the besetting mystery of his life, to which he was anxiously led by the desire of being able, if possible, to meet his father, with a mind unburthened on the day of the wedding.

He appeared at breakfast, but his father was not of the party,—he had gone out before the breakfast-hour, and bid the servants tell Miss Maxwell not to wait for his return.

"Come, then," said Godfrey Moss, "no need of waiting to-day—no fear of his being killed *this* morning, as I never shall forget the day you kept me without breakfast for two or three hours, while he was out upon that mysterious visit of his, the night after the hullabalioo up-stairs."

"Mr. Moss!" said Kate, looking at him with an expression with which she meant to awe him into silence.

"Oh, some indiscreet duchess, I suppose," said Moss; "I don't want to pry into the secrets of the prison-house."

"Kate," said Edward, who had grown from circum-

stances somewhat suspicious of his father's eccentricities, "what was that story?"

"Edward," said Kate, "I am surprised at your asking me. I have sworn, sworn by the most sacred tie of my life, my duty to my father, never to reveal what I saw that night, nor ever to allude to any of the circumstances connected with it. I wonder *you* should wish me to violate such an engagement."

"Why," said Moss, "by this time to-morrow, Kittums, your conscience won't be in your own keeping,—you'll have a lord and master, and then you will have no credit for keeping a secret, now ——"

"Let me entreat you both — be quiet," said Kate. "What I saw that night, even though at this moment I really do not know the meaning of it, will never be effaced from my memory."

"It wan't the ghost of your sweetheart chap in India, was it, Kittums?" said Moss, as he filled his mouth with a piece of toast, so well buttered as to bedew its corners.

The chord was touched that vibrated through Kate's whole heart and soul. Moss meant no harm, the thought struck him, and as he had no conception of such a feeling as fills the bosom of a woman who has once, and fondly, loved, he thought what he said was rather *piquante* than otherwise, and not particularly mischievous: at the moment, and under the circumstances, it was too much for Kate, she burst into tears and ran out of the breakfast-room.

"Upon my word, Moss," said Edward, "you are *too* bad; — why, what could induce you to say such a thing to poor Kate?"

"I didn't know," said Moss; "I'm sure if she bursts out crying about that cretur in India, to-day, she ought not to marry Jack Three-per-cents to-morrow."

"But you know that poor Somerford is actually dead," said Edward, "and that she has only heard of his death within three or four days."

"Better be dead than alive, then," said Moss, "if she 's to be Mrs. Apperton; because now she knows that this poor cretur is in his grave or burnt, or whatever they do

to get rid of 'em in them outlandish parts, it 's no manner o' use for her to be worritting, and poking about. A dead man cannot marry a live woman, and so all for the best; he 's gone, well, then, she may just as well marry Apperton as not."

"You don't enter into the characters of women," said Ned; "there is a constancy, a devotedness about them, which is utterly unknown to man."

"Witness your friend Miss Jane Epsworth," said Moss: "there 's constancy for you. Give us some more toast."

"I admit that I deserved to lose *her*," said Edward; "I neglected her—that 's no case in point."

"Ah, no great loss neither," replied Godfrey. "I 'm sure with such a cretur of an aunt she never could have come to good; why that old body won't come down to breakfast for the next hour. She 's as particular about her face and her figure as a girl of fifteen; and when she has done with her frizzles, and fronts, and furbelows, and all the rest of it, her properest place would be up in one of her own cherry-trees to keep away the birdums."

"I wonder if Kate will come back?" said Edward.

"I hope so, poor dear child," said Moss; "for how am I to get my second cup of tea, if she don't?"

"That," said Edward, "was a curious event in our family,—that disturbance in this house, and my father's absence the whole night."

"Oh," said Moss, "I know, it 's some fine mystery about one o' you fashionable creturs—put off matrimony too long—eh, I know—eh."

"But what could Kate have seen here," said Edward, "at the very recollection of which, she shudders even yet?"

"That may be all got up between them," said Moss.

"I do not give my sister credit for sufficient duplicity to *get up* a story," said Edward.

"I say, Ned," said Moss, "have you seen your visionary lady lately?"

"Not very lately," said Edward; "but why——"

"Why, because," said Moss, "I think your father is dreadfully annoyed, and cut up about it:—he thinks you

will make some bad match — throw yourself away, or catch a Tartar, or something unpleasant."

"Does he express himself very strongly on the point?" said Edward.

"No," said Moss; "but in talking over your frequent absence from home, and your bad spirits when you are here, he mentions it — but — what am I to do for my tea? — do, Ned, go and see if Kittums is coming back."

Edward accordingly retreated, having finished his breakfast, and being too glad to get away from his old friend Godfrey, from whom he could gather no very correct information as to his father's feelings, and being especially anxious so to improve his acquaintance (not yet made) with Captain Randolph, of the Wilhelmina, that he might obtain some certain information with respect to the young lady herself, who must certainly be a friend, relation, or acquaintance of the worthy personage. He accordingly betook himself to the streets, *via* the surgery, and out of the pupil's door, leaving Fate to take care of Mr. Godfrey Moss, who, in the sequel, was doomed to a long *tête-à-tête* with Mrs. Epsworth, whom he hated, and who, amongst her numerous other failings, in his eyes, never put sugar or cream enough into his tea.

It was past eleven o'clock when Edward found himself with his face towards the east, starting on his Quixotic expedition: during his walk he arranged the course of his proceedings. He would go on board the Wilhelmina, see Captain Randolph, and state his anxiety to know who the lady was, whom he had traced to his vessel the day before? if she turned out, as he anticipated, to be Mrs. Randolph, he was armed with divers and sundry excuses and apologies, by the aid of which he might "back out;" and if she turned out to be any body else, he might either obtain an interview with her, or, at all events, satisfy himself of her rank and connections; and, above all, with the circumstances which connected her with that vessel. In short, Edward had settled the whole affair — had in his own mind conciliated the schipper, and even had been presented in form to the fair one, from whose lips he perhaps might learn the nature of her at present perplexing acquaintance with his father.

To accelerate his progress, he had recourse to the hackney-coach system; and long before one reached the Tower Stairs, where he proposed to embark, not only because there was a pleasurable association in doing what the *fay* had done the day before, but because it would save him an overland journey to the ship, and, moreover, keep him from an entanglement with Bill and his co-mate, who, notwithstanding their good intentions, might, from being so much in his secret, do him some harm by their observations and remarks while alongside.

As it happened, he found the same watermen plying who took him down the day before, who were too ready to have so liberal a customer; and here it may not be quite out of place to observe, that the smallness of the fares legally allowed to watermen affords one of the principal reasons why men pay such persons much more than they really deserve. The pittance awarded by the Watermen's Company, and sanctioned by the commissioners, is so trifling, that it would be barbarous to exact the labour required from the waterman at the price charged; the consequence is, that they are infinitely overpaid by those who would confine themselves to the simple discharge of the fare, if it were at all proportionate to the work and to the losses the boatmen endure during a long and hard winter. Edward, being bound by no fixed rule, had remunerated his two gondoliers so liberally that they flew to usher him to their wherry, in which no sooner was he seated, and the word Wilhelmina uttered, than she cut the parting water, and shot onward to the desired goal.*

The day was bright, and milder than the preceding one; the sun shone, and the river was covered with vessels. Proud sight for our favoured, happy city — here lay the Swede, the Russian, and the Hollander; there swam upon our waters the Gaul, the Portuguese, the Spaniard, and the Dane. Here floated the striped flag of the trans-Atlantic republic, and there, in the breeze, was wafted the Prussian eagle, or the Danish cross; all bearing to our happy mart the luxuries of every quarter of the globe.

* Since this paragraph was written, a new set of regulations, and a new rate of fares, have been established by the Watermen's Company, which very considerably conduce to the objects here stated to be desirable. — 1833.

How well does the enlightened and talented Doctor Arnott, in his interesting "Elements of Physics," bring to our view the activity of the whole living population, for the enjoyment and gratification of their fellow-creatures! "In England," says he, "a man of small fortune may cast his looks around, and say, with truth and exultation, I am lodged in a house that affords me conveniences and comforts, which some centuries ago even a king could not command. Ships are crossing the seas in every direction to bring me what is useful to me from all parts of the earth. In China, men are gathering the tea leaf for me; in America, they are planting cotton for me; in the West India islands, they are preparing my sugar and my coffee; in Italy, they are feeding silk-worms for me; in Saxony, they are shearing the sheep, to make me clothing; at home, powerful steam-engines are spinning and weaving for me, and making cutlery for me, and pumping the mines, that minerals useful to me may be procured. Although my patrimony was small, I have post coaches running all day and night to carry my correspondence; I have roads, and canals, and bridges, to bear the coal for my winter fire—nay, I have protecting fleets and armies around my happy country, to secure my enjoyments and repose. Then I have editors, and printers, who daily send me an account of what is going on in the world amongst all these people who serve me; and in a corner of my house I have books, the miracle of all my possessions, more wonderful than the wishing-cap of the Arabian Tales; for they transport me instantly not only to all places but to all times. By my books I can conjure up before me, to vivid existence, all the great and good men of antiquity, and for my own individual satisfaction, I can make them act over again the most renowned of their exploits; the orators declaim for me; the historians relate; the poets sing; from the equator to the pole, or from the beginning of time until now, by my books I can be where I please. This picture is not overcharged, and might be much extended; such being God's goodness and providence, that each individual of the civilised millions that cover the earth may have nearly the same enjoyments as if he were the single lord of all."

I make no apology for this beautiful and spirited quotation. The sight of the various ships in our port filled the mind of Edward with sensations, perhaps not unlike those of Doctor Arnott when he wrote this luminous recapitulation of the blessings of our country; blessings, of which not even the vile attempts of discontented agitators, exerted to the utmost, can destroy the value.

But where are we?—close to the spot where the bright vision of the night before vanished from Edward's eyes.

"Why, Jem!" said the spokesman to his messmate, "she's gone!"

"So she is!" said his messmate to Jem.

"What's gone?" said Edward.

"Why that Yankee looking clipper, sir," said Jem, "as was here yerterday."

The feelings of Edward Maxwell are indescribable: but the fact was so. The Wilhelmina had sailed at one o'clock in the morning, and was, at the moment of their arrival off Ratcliffe Cross Stairs, somewhere about the Nore.

Edward having ascertained this fact of course returned. He would have followed her by steam, or by the road, and have perhaps yet overtaken her; but the next morning was his sister's wedding day, and he could not be absent; and thus, dispirited and miserable, he returned to London, just as uninformed as ever, about his fair *incognita*, and just as far as he was the day before, from any acquaintance with Captain Randolph of the Wilhelmina.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

Wedded love is founded on esteem,
Which the fair merits of the mind engage.
For these are charms that never can decay:
But time, which gives new whiteness to the swan,
Improves their lustre. FENTON.

EDWARD now felt himself so completely beaten by circumstances, that he could scarcely rally his spirits sufficiently to dine in company; but he was conscious that it was a duty which, however painful the effort might be to himself, he most unquestionably ought to perform; and accordingly, with his father, sister, brother-in-law, Miss Geraldine O'Connochie, Miss Fletcher, and the two Mosses, he sat down to the hospitable board of the surgeon, agitated by a host of passions and feelings, of all of which, however, to do him justice, regret at having unintentionally discovered what he could not but consider his father's weakness, decidedly was uppermost.

He had formed a design, which he nursed in secret, and which he proposed putting into execution the moment after the bride and bridegroom had taken their departure for Brighton on the following day, which had for its object, neither more nor less than discovering the residence of the captain of the good ship Wilhelmina, which had sailed, and ascertaining whether the beautiful creature whom he had lost was actually the gentleman's wife; or, if that were not the case, whether his wife, if she remained at home during his voyage, could give him any account of

the young lady, who, he was quite convinced, was a passenger in the Wilhelmina, and who, at the very moment he was thinking of her, was, in all human probability, sailing across the salt seas to some far distant port.

I really believe, that, in the excitement of the ardent desire Edward felt to ascertain more particulars concerning his beautiful vision, the anxiety to convince himself of the true nature of his father's connection and acquaintance with her had no inconsiderable share; for most assuredly, as I have already endeavoured to express, what he *had* seen had so unsettled his feelings, that he was not yet able to meet his respectable parent without restraint, or maintain a conversational intercourse with him, without a considerable degree of embarrassment.

As the period for Kate's marriage approached, Apperton seemed more and more occupied with her father: they were long and frequently closeted together, until at length Kate herself was summoned to the library, where she was directed to sign certain papers and parchments, which had been brought thither by the family solicitor, the intent or purport of which she neither understood nor sought to know. Her father's desire that she should affix her name to them was quite sufficient to ensure her obedience, convinced, as she was, that with his sanction she could do no act likely to produce pain or repentance, at any future period of her existence.

When she left the library, after having performed the required ceremony, she felt as if she had signed the death-warrant of her happiness; and yet she could scarcely suffer such a feeling to hold any lengthened sway in her mind, because her own good sense told her, that she should have weighed all the circumstances of her marriage with Apperton, at a time when the consideration of them might have been (had she chosen) followed by the rejection of his offer, and not have suffered matters to go to extremities, as they now had gone; besides, she struggled to check the emotions by which she felt her heart agitated, not only by the recollection that it was now too late to retract, but by a confirmed belief, that, let the extent of her happiness in marriage be what it might, she had, in the connection with

Apperton, as good a chance of contentedness (which was all she now hoped for) as she could have expected in any other.

As the day drew to its close, the countenance of Godfrey Moss assumed a hundred different expressions; while the bridegroom elect seemed to bear the near approach of his happiness with a philosophy which his enemies might have called indifference. He had passed great part of the forenoon in consultation with Maxwell, and some time of the afternoon in superintending the preparation of the chariot, which he had bought at the bazar. It was the first close carriage he had ever possessed, and of course was not a new one; for it may be remarked, that whenever a rising man in middling life mounts a carriage, he begins by buying a second-hand one: the next he has, perhaps he builds, but never the first.

Edward was more than usually restless during the day; his determination to explore the unknown regions of Bermondsey, and seek out the residence of Captain Randolph, of the good ship Wilhelmina, was fixed; but he found it would be impossible for him to execute it until the morrow: in the mean time, he endeavoured to console himself by thinking, that the lovely girl might be the identical Mrs. Randolph, of whom the old watermen had spoken. She might, too, remain in England, perhaps at Bermondsey, while her husband was ploughing the salt seas — circling the round world: — and then — what then? — there stood his father, talking to Miss O'Connochie, in precisely the same attitude, with the same energetic action, and the same winning smile, as he had seen him display while conversing with his mysterious beauty in the Green Park.

At length came dinner — tea — supper; the bride's maids departed, to return at nine o'clock in the morning — then went Apperton, for the last time, to his bachelor's room; Moss and his brother succeeded; and then retired to their respective beds the family themselves. It seemed now that the affair was irrevocably concluded; in nine short hours, Kate Maxwell would have ceased to exist, and have begun a new life as Mrs. Apperton.

It turned out, however, that the main incident of the

morrow was not to be the only interesting one — but I must not anticipate.

At eight o'clock in the morning, nearly all the parties concerned in the momentous ceremony were assembled. By half-past eight, Miss Fletcher arrived, looking very pale, and very cold, and very sleepy; and in another quarter of an hour, Miss O'Connochie made her appearance, giving evidence, by her looks, that she was as unaccustomed to early rising as her fair colleague. Edward received them in the drawing-room, and for a moment thought Miss Fletcher looked interesting; in which opinion, no doubt, Miss Fletcher herself entirely coincided; but as he had now established a test of beauty in his mind, in the person of his mysterious young lady, the impression went off again very soon, notwithstanding a little skilful play with a pair of soft languishing blue eyes, into which "Miss F." (as Miss O'Connochie called her) contrived, upon this special occasion, to throw an expression of archness not usually exhibited by her upon ordinary occasions, or in every-day society.

The Mosses made their appearance; the vicar desiring to know the precise minute at which the ceremony was to take place, in order that he might betake himself to the church some short time in advance of the "procession," in order that they might not have to wait for his robing on their arrival.

Katherine had not yet shown herself; and Miss O'Connochie proceeded to the commencement of her important duties, by visiting the bride in her dressing-room. Apperton came in a new stone-blue coat and gilt buttons, a white waistcoat, fawn-coloured breeches, with bunches of bows at the knee, white silk stockings, and a new pair of pumps; nothing could be fresher than his appearance, his coat was so very blue, his buttons were so very bright, his hands were so very red, and his neckcloth was so very white, that he perfectly dazzled Miss Fletcher, whose cheek he proceeded to kiss, upon his entrance into the dining-room.

Whether this is the privilege of a bridegroom, or an established custom upon similar occasions, I do not, as far

as any personal knowledge of my own goes, pretend to know. The chaste salute, however, was a hearty smack, which produced a slight blush on Miss Fletcher's cheek, and an exclamation of "La! Mr. Apperton!" which, in its tone and expression, certainly partook more of surprise than anger. It would have made the thing personal not to have served Miss Geraldine O'Connochie in a similar way when she returned to the room; and accordingly she was subjected to precisely the same process: she, however, received the shock with infinitely greater philosophy and fortitude than Miss Fletcher; for, after the report upon her cheek, no sound of either anger or surprise was heard; on the contrary, she took the bridegroom's hand, and gave it what might be fairly called a hearty shake.

At length came down Miss Maxwell herself, more cold and more sleepy than any of her friends and companions; her eyes betrayed the fact that she had slumbered little during the night; yet she smiled, and received the affectionate salute and embrace of her betrothed with a look of complacency, even beyond her father's hopes. Maxwell, upon being informed by Edward of the evolutions which had been performed by the stockbroker upon the cheeks of the ladies, very much applauded the scheme, and immediately taking advantage of the precedent, repeated the operation upon both of them; after which Edward, for fear of being thought either dull or uncivil, followed the excellent example of his amiable parent.

Moss sat in his armed chair, taking snuff, and looking on with wonder at what was passing.

"Now, Mousetrap," said the elder Maxwell, "now is *your* turn."

"My turn at what?" said Godfrey, "psha, trash, slabber!"

Moss had evidently been forced out of bed too early, and most undoubtedly would have said something excessively rude in half a moment, had not his brother announced his departure, in order to be in readiness for the ceremony; on which Godfrey, taking advantage of the carriage which was to convey the vicar to church, betook himself with

that reverend gentleman in the advanced guard of the march.

In a country wedding there is a joyousness and gaiety quite unknown in metropolitan marriages. The church-yard filled with expecting tenants, waiting to catch a glimpse of their landlord's daughter and the lover of her choice. Shouting children and ringing bells announce the coming of the bridal *cortège*, and mirth and jollity crown the conclusion of the ceremony. On the occasion of which I am now to speak, there was any thing but gaiety or mirth. It was a wretched morning; there fell a mizzling rain through the peas-soup atmosphere of London, which chilled every living thing, while a sort of smoky, misty, foggy vapour, hovering over the ground, made "darkness only visible." To prove in a few words the badness of the weather, it is only necessary to say, that, as the shining bridegroom handed his amiable Kitty into the carriage at her father's door, he observed, at that crisis of affairs, "that he thought they should have a wretched journey of it to Brighton."

Wretched! — Any journey with one's bride wretched! What has rain or cold to do with the warmth and sunshine of the heart? Siberia, with the one loved being, would be as blooming, as cheering, and as fertile, as Italy; a dungeon so accompanied, more delightful than the brightest palace of the East without her; but not to Mr. Apperton,—who, like hackney-coach horses, had his work and recreation limited by the bills of mortality; who had not been twenty miles from the metropolis in as many years; who believed Richmond Hill one of the highest mountains in Europe, and considered Severn-droog Castle, on Shooter's Hill, a perfectly inaccessible fortress. It is true, he had been to Margate, on the salt sea, in a steam-boat; but, the moment he embarked at the Tower Stairs, he sat himself down in a sort of coffee-house box in the cabin, with the daily newspaper in his pocket, and never left his corner till he was bumped ashore on Jarvis's jetty. A journey of fifty miles to Apperton formed such a large amount on the debit side of his day's happiness, that to have to undertake it, with all the accompaniments

of wind and rain, was to him a matter of sufficient importance to make him forget, in the contemplation of it, that he had to enjoy the society of an amiable, accomplished young woman during its progress, and that, too, with all the rights, privileges, immunities, and pre-eminences of a husband; forgetting, in short, that all her accomplishments, all her amiability, with herself into the bargain, were decidedly his own: but so it was—the weather had put him out of sorts, and the marriage procession, consisting of two carriages, had nearly reached St. James's church, where the indissoluble knot was to be tied, before he recovered his serenity, or rubbed quite dry and clean four or five of his new gilt buttons, which had been moistened by that indescribable humidity for which the atmosphere of London, at certain periods of the year, is celebrated.

At the Jermyn Street door of St. James's church descended the hymeneal party; Kate and her bride's maids; the two Maxwells and the bridegroom—Moss, the layman, was already in the church, seated in a pew, out of which he wriggled himself as they approached.

"Infernal cold, Mack," said he; "I thought your coach had broken down. I have seen two pair of fools settled for life before you came, and now—ugh!"

This sound, indicative of his utter disapprobation of something, was followed by a look at Apperton, who certainly, when frisky, was by no means graceful; indeed Kate herself thought she had never seen him to such a disadvantage, as when he was attempting to make the amiable in his way through the church.

It would be making what is too evidently bad, worse, to notice the frequent glances which were exchanged by Kate and her brother during their progress: they were not the mirthful, careless looks in which they were wont to converse; nor such as two persons, so connected, should at such a moment have adopted towards each other; they two knew the secrets of each other's heart; and the expression of poor Kate's countenance, when her fond and affectionate Edward last saw it, before she became a wife, convinced him that now the moment of trial was come, it

would require all the strength of her mind — all the firmness of her resolution — and all the command which he knew her to have over herself, to go through the ceremony without sinking under the weight of her now useless affliction.

The elder Maxwell saw not this, or if he did, chose not to show that he did: he was gay and cheerful, and his fine countenance was heightened by a smile of contentment and pleasure. In the marriage now to be celebrated, he secured the interest and activity of his speculating son-in-law — he saw new comforts for his daughter — new riches for himself; and all that he lamented was, the loss of Jane's fortune, which he could not but feel Edward had literally thrown away.

They approached the altar — Miss O'Connochie was near the bride — Miss Fletcher held back, because the damp had affected her hair, which was as completely out of curl, as if it had never been under the hand or tongs of her maid. The weather, however, was so dark and gloomy, that the failure had more effect upon herself than upon any body else; she was what a sportsman would call "dead beat" by this trivial mishap, and literally shrouded herself behind the hat and feathers of the gentle Geraldine, seeing that she, the Fletcher, had hoped on that very occasion to entangle in those very silken meshes the heart of Mr. Edward Maxwell.

The parties arranged — the service began — and proceeded — Katherine pronounced, "I will," firmly and audibly — she was given away — she repeated after the clergyman the sacred words in which her troth was plighted — the ring was on her finger — they knelt before the altar — they were irrevocably united — they were pronounced married — and Dr. Moss, of Fudley-cum-Pipes, gave the impressive blessing; at the conclusion of which, a voice, which sounded close to Edward, responded "Amen!" with an earnestness and fervour that could have inspired no casual auditor.

The peculiarity of tone, the devotion, the feeling, the warmth, the piety, with which it was breathed, attracted Edward's attention, and he involuntarily turned round to

see who could have thus deeply interested themselves in the ceremony, when, to his utter amazement, he beheld, half concealed by one of the pillars which support the gallery, his unknown beauty.

Their eyes met — she caught hold of the object which had partly concealed her for support. Edward was forced not only to remain where he was, but to seem to attend to the service, the greater part of which was yet to come. Where his feelings, his devotion, his fraternal love, or his filial duty were, I know not; his thoughts were not his own, for he could not recall them from the object he had just beheld; he could hear his heart beat while the ceremony was proceeding, and not daring again to look round, heard also the footsteps of some person retiring along the matted aisle. There he was: she would be gone before he could quit the church. What then? Why was she there? What was the link that bound her to his father? for he could not doubt that he was aware of her being in the church, after what he had himself seen in the Park.

Then she was *not* gone in the ship which had sailed — what could she be doing on board such a vessel, and at such a time as that at which he had traced her to it — in the evening? It was now clear, as he thought, that the connection, whatever it was, which he knew from his own knowledge united her and his parent, could be in no way dishonourable, or he never would have brought her, or permitted her to have come to witness the ceremony of his daughter's marriage: of course it was by *his* permission, perhaps by his invitation, that she was there; and then why should this female, unknown to him by name, and to his sister even by sight, respond to a blessing invoked upon her, and a prayer for her happiness, with a fervour and ardency which nothing short of intimate consanguinity could inspire? Conceive what a crowd of thoughts, of fears, of doubts, of hopes, of pains, and anxieties, were whirling in poor Edward's brain during the explanation of the marriage duties, which seemed to him hours in length, and which at its conclusion left him in amazement, — with which word, as all the idle readers of matrimony too well know, the salutary lecture ends.

He stood like a statue, unconscious of what was going on; and when the rest of the party retired to the vestry, he lingered in the church, hoping to see the lovely vision again; but he was disappointed, although his mind was freshly agitated by seeing his father do precisely what he himself was doing—he saw *him* evidently looking for somebody; and what added to his conviction that the young lady was there by his father's desire, and with his concurrence, was the fact, that the old gentleman, in his search, crossed from where he had been standing during the ceremony, directly to the pillar where she had so ill concealed herself, and even walked down that aisle, evidently in search of her.

In fact, this put an end to all doubt on Edward's part, and he resolved, the moment his sister and her husband were on the road to Brighton, to commence a series of operations, by which he should, perhaps, discover the girl; and, if that failed, he determined to open his heart to his father himself, and take the consequences; for he found the struggle not only between love and duty, but between duty and disrespect, so strong, that he could endure it no longer.

In the middle of his very unpleasant reflections on the subject, he literally shuddered, when his father, coming up to him, put his arm through his, and expressed his satisfaction at the event of the morning, and added to Edward, that, during the absence of the Appertons at Brighton, until he joined them there, he, Ned, must spare him more of his time at home than he had latterly done; for, said he, "when my Kate is away, Ned, who have I to console or cheer me but *you?*" Why, thought Ned, one of the prettiest creatures in England; and the thought was so predominant, that he, as nearly as possible, had taken that very opportunity of divulging the secret knowledge of his parent's intimacy with the fair lady, which he possessed; but he checked himself for the moment, and reserved the *dénouement* for a period when the old gentleman could better afford him time and attention to listen to it.

All the necessary forms to complete the union of the Appertons having been gone through, the party returned through the same fog, and mist, and wet, which had

covered the procession with dinginess, to Burlington Gardens, where what, if it had been advertised in the newspapers by people of higher rank, would have been called a *déjeûné à la fourchette*, was ready prepared, in which art vied with nature, in the production of all the delicacies of the season, with which the tables *literally* groaned. However, as Gunter had no share in the proceedings, and Maxwell had no servants sufficiently interested in his private proceedings to make an article of it for the newspapers, I shall take the liberty of saying, that they found a remarkably comfortable breakfast on their return, and that, although Katherine did not herself partake of it, (seeing that she retired to divest herself of her wedding dress, and habit herself more suitably to the time of day, the season of the year, and the journey she was about to take,) all the other characters of the drama performed their several parts with wonderful activity and judgment, and amongst them, who strove more than Godfrey Moss, and the convivial vicar of Fudley-cum-Pipes?

After sundry attacks upon fowls, tongues, hams, prawns, marmelades, eggs, thin salutary slices of broiled bacon, tea, coffee, and cocoa, Apperton proceeded, like his bride, to assume a costume better calculated for travelling than that in which he was married; and just as he made his appearance, booted and great-coated (all new), the King Street Bazar carriage drove up to the door—brides may mourn, when I say, there were but a pair of posters, and no favours! This last omission, however, was at Katherine's earnest desire; indeed the absence of *éclat* in any part of the affair was studied and premeditated, since it appeared, both to Apperton and his wife, that nothing could possibly be more disagreeable than giving notoriety to the novelty of their situation to every passing stranger.

Kate at length re-appeared amongst her friends. She was as calm and placid as if it had been Miss O'Connochie's wedding which they were celebrating instead of her own. When, at length, the carriage was pronounced ready, she wept some tears as her father led her towards it—but her grief was transient, since she knew she should soon be joined by her family.

Separations themselves are hateful things, descriptions of them, therefore, must be hateful too — so shut the door ;— they are gone — the bride's maids are enquiring for their shawls and "things," the Mosses getting fidgety — Maxwell is particularly anxious to go out in his carriage, and Edward still more anxious to discover Mrs. Randolph — for such, in his own mind, he had now determined his beauty to be — wife to the Captain of the Wilhelmina, and in this state of things the party separated ; but, as far as related to Edward and the two Mosses, only to meet again at dinner, at six o'clock, at Maxwell's.

When all the whirl and worry of the ceremony were over, there seemed a new and universal dulness spread through Maxwell's house. Edward went into the drawing-rooms ; the piano-forte was closely shut up, the furniture was all set in order, every chair was in its place, without the slightest appearance of comfort or use. Kate's work-table, which stood in one of the windows, was locked, and her own writing-table, which used to be covered with notes, and scraps, and albums, and all sorts of agreeable nonsense, was now formally set out with the inkstand in the middle, and the paper, and the paper-knife, and the wax, and the blotting-paper, all in a regular display, — he almost thought he heard his sister's voice, and he walked and wandered about the rooms with a feeling of indescribable unhappiness : he almost began to wish that Mrs. Epsworth had stayed for the wedding, and stayed in town afterwards ; but the old lady, whose conscience, I suppose, smote her occasionally, did not seem to think that remaining the constant and sole companion of the younger Maxwell, who had lost her daughter, and the elder Maxwell, who appeared never to forget that he had lost her fortune, would be perfectly agreeable, and accordingly betook herself to her home, where, the centre of a small circle of her own, she had the power of extorting something like respect, even if she failed to obtain the affection of her neighbours.

Edward, as it was, found home unbearable ; and having established in his mind the certainty of his success in pursuing the captain's wife to Bermondsey, started forthwith in the direction of that outskirt of the metropolis, calcu-

lating that great expedition was not absolutely necessary, since it would require some time for the fair object of his enquiry to regain her home, after having so strangely witnessed the ceremony of his sister's marriage, in the parish church of Saint James, Westminster.

How soon a knot of intimate friends, in these days of steam and expeditious travelling, are scattered and spread like globules of quicksilver under the pressure of the finger! Three or four days ago, Maxwell's house was the receptacle of a nest of relations, brought together, it must be confessed, under somewhat extraordinary circumstances —to-day, how separated! The volatile major, and his happy wife, were on the Continent—Kate, and her any thing but volatile husband, were half way to Brighton—Mrs. Epsworth was concocting a snug tea and card party for her neighbours—the Mosses, who were before absent, had now returned to London—Edward was on his way to Bermondsey—and Edward's father was on his way to visit his patients.

The explorations of Captain Parry towards the North Pole have met with high eulogy and honourable reward. The great Cook, though more successful in his outset, was more unfortunate in the termination of his discoveries. Columbus stands immortalised by his deeds—Vancouver, Raleigh, Drake, all are high-sounding names; but Edward, emulating all their enterprises, and transcending all their toils, explored and succeeded in discovering the residence of Captain Randolph, of the Wilhelmina, in the Grange Road, Bermondsey, at which destination he arrived before three, P.M., on the day of his departure from London.

He collected his information respecting the captain's dwelling from sundry small boys bearing beer pots, in wooden cases, after the fashion of those parts; and of certain of the natives habituated to the making and selling of bread, until, by comparing notes, and putting "that and that together," as they say, he found himself in front of a small smart house, before which, within green rails, was laid out a neat "fore court," a circular box-bound bed stood in the centre of the gravel, and a white pipe-clayed

stony path led to the door, to which the ascent was by four steep steps.

In one of the drawing-room windows (for there were two) stood a cage, containing a green cockatoo. In the parlour window (for there was but one) stood, on a small table, another cage, containing a blue cockatoo; in the kitchen window, which opened into the area, stood a huge perch, on which roosted a grey parrot, of much larger growth than either of the others. As Edward, "beer directed," ascended the steps, he perceived, exactly in the centre of the door, a brass-plate, engraved with the desired word, RANDOLPH, in capital letters, of large dimensions.

Thus satisfied, the youthful traveller knocked: nobody appeared; but he heard, through the flimsy partition of the panels, a hurry and scuffling, indicative of "putting things away," and, after a little delay, a maid-servant in black opened the door, and forthwith the house gave out a powerful smell of cockatoos and onions.

"Is Mrs. Randolph at home?" said Edward.

"Missis is at home, sir," said the maid; "but she ant, by no means, what you would call well, sir. What's your business, sir?"

"Why," said Edward, who was not a little puzzled at the question; "I—I only wished to speak to her."

"Please tell me your name, sir," said the servant.

"Mrs. Randolph doesn't know my name," replied Edward.

"Show the gemman up into the first floor," said a voice from below, which, if it were not that of the great grey parrot in the kitchen window, sounded very like it.

"This way, sir," said the maid, who gradually softened in her manner towards Edward, as she found her mistress inclined to admit his visit.

And accordingly Edward followed her up a carpeted ladder, railed on the side, and called a flight of stairs: in two moderate strides he reached the front drawing-room, where he was left for a few minutes to contemplate the surrounding objects.

Over the chimney-piece was a looking-glass, which produced upon any thing reflected by it a similar effect to that which is obtained by looking at one's face in a spoon; it had a row of gilt knobs round it, and a figure of Britannia, surrounded by bales, shot, and anchors, on the top of the frame. Two pasteboard chimney sweepers, their bags forming what are called "spill cases," and two painted wine glasses filled with sand, constituted the remaining ornaments of the "mantel-shelf," and were flanked by two squat black iron candlesticks, hung round with glass drops. In the very centre appeared a watch, which did not go, placed in a marble case, with little columns on its sides, and a little hole in its middle for the dial to come through; added to these, was "pretty cocky" in the window, as before noticed.

A brown japanned tea-urn reposed on a painted wooden slab, in a recess on one side of the fire-place, resting on a scarlet and green rug of Mrs. Randolph's own workmanship; and, on what she would have called the wooden slab, "to answer," in the other recess, stood a large glass beaker, with a snaked stem, imported by her loving spouse at some former time from Holland, surrounded by divers glasses and tumblers, amongst which lay Captain Randolph's own peculiar punch-ladle with a whalebone handle, and a Queen Anne's guinea at the bottom of the bowl. In two of the largest tumblers were stuck the eggs of ostriches, and under each slab was placed a china jar some two feet high.

The walls of the apartment, besides the looking glass, were adorned with a portrait of Lord Nelson, two prints of sea fights, and a view of Macao. The pictures of two persons, painted in oil, were pendant amongst the prints, one, as it might naturally be supposed, being the effigies of Captain Randolph, the other the likeness of a woman of the broadest possible dimensions, with the bluest eyes, the brownest hair, and the reddest cheeks that picture ever had: human beings never possessed any thing like them; but the sight of them was death to Edward, who saw in the likenesses a "sign" of his approaching mortification and disappointment. Of course the lady must be Mrs. Randolph; and

here was he penned up in the drawing-room of the house, to be received by the dame whose resemblance he already saw before him, and, having been received, to make his way out again, as well as he possibly could.

But then the lovely girl might be the daughter—who could tell? Time, the "edax rerum," which levels all things, alone could decide; and, to say truth, old Chronos, in the present instance, was not very long about his work, for in less than three minutes the drawing-room door opened, and presented to the eyes of the embarrassed Edward a human being who bore exactly the same resemblance to the picture on the wall as monsters at fairs do to the show-cloths which are exhibited as tempters on the outsides of booths and caravans.

"What 's your pleasure, sir?" said Mrs. Randolph, whose roseate cheeks, contrasted with her sable garments, gave her a "rouge et noir" appearance quite terrific; not to speak of the predominant flavour of onions, which it should seem she had herself been frying, as an agreeable addition to her beefsteaks.

"Why, madam," said Maxwell, "I—I really only wanted to ask a question."

"Well, sir, out with it at once, and no offence neither," said the lady.

"Captain Randolph, I believe, commands the Wilhelmina?" said Edward.

"Yes, sir,—the Vilelmeeny," said Mrs. Randolph, "and igh time it is he shoud; he 's been now a sailor, man and boy, these six and twenty years, sir; and it arn't afore he shud be that he 's got to be cappun."

"I am quite sure of his merits, madam," said Edward—who really didn't know exactly what to say.

"Why, as to his merrits, ye see, sir," said the lady, "there 's them as has got gumtion and them as arn't; and my old man, I *will* say it for him, knows what 's what, as well as is neighburs; but its hup ill work, them there sea affairs is, if ye harn't got nothing to begin with; and many a night I have laid and eared the vind a vistling down my bedroom chimly in the vinter, when my poor Bill has been a vorking avay on the salt seas; but it 's not

of no kind of use a fretten, sir, and now is turn's com'd, you see, to be cappun, and the Villelemey is part is hone; he 's part properioter of her, sir; and so if it 's about ship business you are come, perhaps I can give you a hanser."

"Captain Randolph has sailed, I——" said Edward, enquiringly.

"From the river," said the lady; "but I expects to hear from him at Portsmouth, and p'raps Plymouth, afore his reglarly off, you know."

"My question," said Edward, "merely related to his passengers; indeed, I thought—I am sure you will forgive me—I understood that you were going with him on the voyage."

"Not I, sir," said Mrs. Randolph; "no—no—one 's enough to go skimbling skambling all over the world: who 'd take care of our bits of things if it wan't for me? there 's my poor birds, why, la, I vallies em just like human creturs—feeds 'em every day myself, and when they die, bless their pretty innocent arts, I gets a neighbur of mine to stuff em and put em in glass cases, where they look as nat'ral as life, and costs nothing for eating; no—I harn't a turn for the sea, sir; besides it an't a nice place for women, as I thinks."

"You have no family, I presume, ma'am?" said Edward.

"And why so, sir?" said Mrs. Randolph; "is it because I'm fond of dumb hannymals you think that? I begs your pardon, I have a darter, as nice a gal as ever you clapped your two eyes upon."

"Does she visit the Wilhelmina sometimes, when she is in the river?" said Edward, who could not help admiring the good nature with which the mistress of the house answered his questions.

"To be sure she does," said the mother; "but why d' ye want to know so much about my darter, sir?"

"I repeat, madam," said Edward, "that I have a thousand apologies to make, but I will be very candid with you. I have seen a young lady with whom I am most anxious to have five minutes' conversation; I have reason to think she is related to your family, or to Captain Randolph; and now that you tell me the Wilhelmina is yet at one of the

outports, I really believe that the young lady in question is somehow connected with the ship, and——"

"Oh! la! sir," said the good-humoured lady, "if ye want to see my darter you shall see her, in the shaking out of a reef. She 's no reason to be ashamed to show her face, and if it 's any law question, as I suspect it is, and you are come here to pump me about my old man, why, knowing as I do that his character's as clear as christial, I 'll help you to sift it to the bottom: we fear nobody—not we."

"My dear ma'am," said Edward, "I assure you I——"

"Oh, you shall see her," said Mrs. Randolph; and, putting her head over the balustrades, she called to Martha, the maid, to send up Miss Caroline. "No, sir," continued the lady, returning to the charge, "we are all fair and above board in this house; you shall see my gal in welcome."

This was the last hope; it might even now be the phantom embodied at Bermondsey. After a few minutes' delay, he heard a heavyish step stumping up the little staircase, and the door opening, presented to his eyes an exceedingly broad, squat girl of about fifteen, in a black frock, with a well fitting Holland pinafore, very bright eyes, very black hair, a snub nose, and a laughing, good-humoured countenance.

"Want me, ma?" said Caroline.

"No, Cary, not particler; it is only for this here gemman to look at you, my dear," said Mrs. Randolph.

Caroline blushed up to the eyes, and all over as much of her neck as was visible.

"I really have so very much to apologise," said Maxwell; "you have quite mistaken my object: I merely thought that a young lady who was on board Captain Randolph's ship the other evening, might have been part of your family, and I was anxious to have said a few words to her."

"Young lady aboard my husband's ship!" said Mrs. Randolph, whose cheeks began to be more crimson than ever: "go down stairs, my dear Caroline; you have passed muster on deck, as your pa says—go below."

Caroline accordingly went, but not with the same sort of

alacrity she had discovered in ascending. "Now, sir," said the matron, evidently getting into a passion, "what is it you want here? If you have any questions to ax, as I have said afore, I am ready and willing to answer them; I have told you, I 'spose, what you wanted to know, and now what else is it?"

"Why—can you inform me, madam," said Edward, "what passengers go with Captain Randolph this voyage—and where they are going to?"

"I can answer that in an uncommon short space of time," said Mrs. Randolph, "for he has not no passengers whatsumever."

"Then, madam, you have told me all I wanted to learn," said Ned; "and again I must beg you to excuse the great liberty I have taken, and to accept my best thanks for your kindness."

"Oh, as to the matter o' that," replied the lady, "there 's no great kindness in answering when you are axed; I 'm bound to be civil to every body as comes upon my husband's business, as I thought you did; howsumever, it seems as how you come on your own."

Edward felt he had no business there at all. "I wish you a very good morning, ma'am," said Maxwell.

"Good day, sir," replied Mrs. Randolph: "here, Martha—show this here gemman out."

These last words were spoken with an emphasis not to be misunderstood. It conveyed, "Mind he does not take any thing with him;" and accordingly, down went Ned, and glad enough he was, when he found himself at the bottom of the pipe-clay steps, and well out of the house, although he had taken nothing by his motion. On casting his eyes towards the parlour window, he found that the cockatoo of that station had been removed, and that young pinafore had taken the bird's place—whether the better to watch his departure, or exhibit her own pretty little plump person, Ned did not stop to consider.

This expedition, however, and its failure, produced a very powerful effect upon Edward's mind; and having a somewhat long walk before him, he threw together all the

circumstances of the case, and felt resolved to delay no longer opening his heart to his father.

The deep impression the girl had made upon him, rooted as it even then seemed to be, might, perhaps, be extirpated (not that he saw the probability); and he would at all events have felt bound to stifle it, until he could ascertain enough of her station and character to justify a serious appeal to the old gentleman; but the combined circumstances of seeing his parent in earnest and confidential communication with this very individual, during a meeting, purposely planned, and for which she had been waiting in a common highway of milliners' assignations; and her presence at his sister's wedding, which could not have been accidental, the earnestness and fervour with which she joined in the service, not generally interesting to young ladies who are not principal performers in the ceremony; all so clearly proved the existence of some tie between them, beyond that which had accidentally (and so marvellously, as it should seem,) connected them, that Edward decided, if he were left *tête-à-tête* with his father, that very day, after dinner, he would at once put an end to a doubt and mystery which, while they greatly detracted from his filial respect, continued to put a restraint upon his conversation when directed to old Maxwell, which he could no longer patiently endure.

The fates seemed to favour his design of inducing the *dénouement;* for after the very dullest of dinners had ended, he discovered that Moss and his brother had accepted seats in a private box at Drury Lane theatre, which circumstance would most agreeably and conveniently leave him and his parent alone.

How many times have men, during their lives, wished for an opportunity to achieve some end, to carry some point, and yet, when it arrived, felt that the difficulty of breaking the ice was too great to be attempted. There is somewhere extant an old song, illustrative of this unpleasant timidity in a lover, which fortunately I do not recollect, for it is so very apposite, that if I had remembered it, I must have quoted it, and altogether I am inclined to believe that it is not quite correct: leaving, therefore, the difficulties of love out of the question, let us present to view the two Maxwells

alone, for the first time after the younger one had made the discovery to the disadvantage of the elder one; the Mosses having retired, and left the field open for the conflict.

A silence of some length succeeded the departure of the eccentric brothers; the younger Maxwell took the poker and stirred the fire, and broke, with infinite skill and considerable assiduity, a large coal, which surmounted all its sable brethren of Lambton's main in the grate.

"It's rather cold to-night, Ned," said Maxwell.

"Yes, sir," said Edward, looking at the fire, and seeing, amidst its flickering brilliancy, the Green Park—the meeting—St. James's church—the vision behind the column—Captain Randolph's house—fat Caroline in the pinafore—Mrs. Randolph and the three cockatoos.

"Where have you been this morning," said the elder Maxwell, "walking or riding?"

"Walking, sir," said Ned—giving the fire another digging sort of poke.

"I have been to Hendon," said the elder Maxwell, "to see a poor fellow who is suffering dreadfully, and there I was kept till I came home to dinner; I must go there again in the morning—a hunting fall merely—but the consequences are extremely serious."

"I have been as far as Bermondsey to-day," said Edward.

"Bermondsey!" echoed the elder Maxwell—"what could have taken you to Bermondsey?"

"Curiosity, sir," said Edward; "I had an object."

"A search after your fair phantom, Ned?" said the father.

"Exactly so, sir," replied the son.

"That's a search I would recommend you to give up," said Maxwell, filling his glass, and putting the bottle to Edward. "Such a person as you describe that young woman to be—I mean, a young woman walking alone, without either protector or servant, and in a part of the town where ladies are not in the habit of walking the streets as amateurs, can come to no good; and you might, perhaps, entangle yourself in some connection, which would be highly in-

jurious, either to your respectability in forming it, or to your happiness in abandoning it."

"I have seen the young lady twice, sir, since I mentioned her to you," said Edward, looking firmly at his father — his hands growing as cold as ice, his throat parched, and his cheeks burning.

"Oh, I suppose," said his father, "you didn't choose to communicate, for fear of Moss's raillery."

"No, sir," said Edward, "I had other — better motives."

"How d' ye mean? Ned, you look agitated," said Maxwell; "what's the meaning of this?"

"My heart is very full, sir," said Edward; "I am placed in a situation the most painful — I — I cannot bear to say what I know — but I know something that I feel I ought not to conceal from you."

"Gracious heaven!" exclaimed Maxwell, "has Katherine told you any thing?"

"What, sir?" said Edward, alarmed at his father's earnestness.

"Answer me *that*, Edward," said his father, pale and trembling, "in an instant — has your sister — has *my* daughter, Kate, told you what she — but stop — stop — I know she has not — she could not. What d' ye mean you *know?* — Speak — you have never had concealment from me on any important point, nor I from my family."

"If I were sure of that," said Edward, "I should be too happy."

"To what do you refer?" asked Maxwell, still violently affected with a mixed feeling of doubt and alarm — "nothing relative to Kate — nothing that she has told you?"

"On the contrary, sir," said Edward, "she knows nothing of it, nor would I that she should for the world."

"Explain, then," said Maxwell, recovering with this announcement all his wonted presence of mind; "explain, then, what you *do* mean?"

"It is most difficult, most painful," said Edward; "but I am sure, for all our sakes, it is best I should be explicit."

"To what does it relate?" said Maxwell.

"To the young creature, whose beauty and manners have so seriously affected my happiness," said Edward.

"Bravo!" said Maxwell, filling his glass to the brim, as if millions of pounds of care and anxiety were taken from his heart at the moment—"here's to her health, Ned, be she whom she may."

"Oh! father," said Edward, "the moment is come—you and I cannot—must not drink to that being's health, whoever she may be, together. It is against the laws of society—perhaps, of Heaven!"

"How!" exclaimed Maxwell; "are you mad, Ned?"

"No, no, sir," exclaimed Edward, "I trust not—but I have seen her so situated—so placed—nay, this very day I beheld her——"

At this moment the dinner-parlour door was thrown open, and exhibited the two Mosses returned from the play, whence, finding that, in consequence of a violent cold, Mr. Kean could not perform, they had beaten a rapid retreat, without even leaving the carriage, and were now returned to enjoy a snug, sociable evening, make a party at whist with Maxwell and his son, and wind up the night with some roasted oysters and a jorum of punch, to the health and happiness of the bride and bridegroom at Brighton.

CHAPTER II.

Through storms and tempests so the sailor drives,
Whilst every element in combat strives;
Loud roars the thunder, fierce the lightning flies,
Winds wildly rage, and billows tear the skies;
Safe through the war her course the vessel steers,
The haven gained, the pilot drops his fears,
Thence smiling, he to smoother scenes looks on,
And thinks no more of dangers past and gone. SHIRLEY.

THERE were certain of the ancients, who, for a month after marriage, lived upon mead—hence the honeymoon. Lord Byron has improved upon this, and calls his first month of connubial *bliss* the "treacle moon." Certain it is, that all

persons below the rank of sovereign princes are left to themselves during the eight-and-twenty days immediately succeeding the nuptial ceremony. Crowned heads are not so particular; a king is married on Wednesday — shows himself and his consort in public on the Thursday — perhaps attends a theatrical representation on the Friday, and goes in state to church the following Sunday, as if he had been a Benedick half his life.

What the customs ordinarily observed with the race of stockbrokers upon such occasions may be, I cannot take upon myself to say; but whatever is the general rule, touching their temporary seclusion, it must be broken in upon as far as Apperton and his bride are concerned; for painful as it may be to the reader to be cut short of a very important explanation, by the inopportune arrival of the Tarantula brothers, it is absolutely necessary that I should waft him to Brighton faster than Goodman in his Times, with all his speed and security, could convey him.

On the morning succeeding the wedding-day, Apperton (whose plans and pursuits appeared not in the slightest degree changed by the great alteration which had taken place in his circumstances) proceeded, under the direction of the mistress of the house which they had taken, first to the market to cheapen fish, and then to the post office to enquire for his letters. In the former business, considering it was his *début* in Brighton bartering, he was more successful than in the latter; for although he bitterly complained to Mrs. Gunn that brills and skate "looked up," he found, by intelligence from London, that certain shares and foreign securities, as they were unaptly called, were looking down. The "postscriptum" of one of his correspondent's letters hinted at the suspected frailty of a well-known city firm, and at several other matters, ill-suited to the day on which they were received.

His aspect and manner when he returned to breakfast were any thing but joyous; and with such a treasure as Katherine in his possession it was clear that he had some other treasure to which his heart was more powerfully allied. It was, it must be owned, rather disappointing to Mrs. Apperton to hear her spouse dividing the breakfast

hour between bitterly abusing the cook for spoiling the whitings, and summing up little rows of figures with the greatest solicitude; nay, she was sufficiently a judge of countenances, to see that her dearly beloved would have given the world, if decency had permitted it, to put himself into one of the stages, and start for London that very morning.

Such is the influence of the demon avarice, such the overwhelming power of gambling, when once it has gained possession of the mind,—for gambling Appperton's decidedly was, without even the excuse of temporary excitement, or personal participation in the actual progress of his system; all his success or failure depended upon events over which he himself had no control, and the course of which he could only guess at. To be sure, a stockbroker has one advantage over every other gamester—he gambles while he is asleep as well as when he is awake: the great game goes on night and day; and it should seem, by Apperton's appearance on the present occasion, that the throws of the preceding morning had been very much against him.

It was impossible for Katherine not to feel how completely she had become the secondary object of his attention since the arrival of his letters; and to relieve a sort of aching pain at her heart, which she would rather have died than acknowledge, she turned to the window, whence she could behold the fine combination of sea and sunshine, which, even in the depth of winter or early spring, gives to treeless Brighton all the splendour and brilliancy of a summer's day.

It is seldom (and before the packet-boats to Dieppe were established there, it was still more seldom,) that the view from Brighton is enlivened by the appearance of vessels larger than her own fishing-boats, or mayhap a collier brig, whose venturous master drives her to the end of West Street to unload her useful cargo, at the hazard of his craft; but occasionally the sameness is relieved, and accident gives the walkers and watchers a treat, in the shape of some large outward or homeward bound ship,

thrown within the range of the well-levelled telescopes on the cliffs, or the beach.

This lucky chance turned up to-day, and Katherine exclaimed, with a sort of enthusiasm quite incomprehensible to her husband, —

"Look—look—Apperton, what a large ship there is in the distance!"

"Dear me, Kate," said Apperton, "you frightened me —I thought you had seen something terrible. Is there any thing very wonderful in seeing a ship on the sea?"

"Why *here*," said Kate, chilled to the heart by the manner in which she had been checked by her husband,— "here they do *not* so often see ships—I only mentioned it on that account; besides, nothing can be more beautiful, as an object, than a large vessel under sail."

"I've no taste for ships," said Apperton: "what day did your father propose coming down to us?"

"Monday, I think," said Mrs. Apperton.

"I should like very much to see him," said Apperton; "you would not mind my writing to ask him to come down to us to-morrow."

"Me! no," said Kate—too truly; "I am always happier in my father's society than out of it."

"Then I'll tell him so," said Apperton: "what! is *that* the ship you were talking of?—La! I see nothing so very beautiful about *her*."

"Her distance from us renders her not sufficiently distinct," said Katherine.

"See—d'ye see that smoke?" said Apperton.

"A gun," said Katherine; "she wants a pilot, I suppose."

"Upon my word," said Apperton, "you might be taken for one of the old bathing-women here, you seem to know so much about all these matters: I should not think she could want a pilot now."

"I don't see why she should not," said Katherine: "the dangers and difficulties of channel navigation are infinitely greater hence to the river Thames than any where else; and you may rely upon it, if she have no pilot

yet, she will not proceed without one—but she seems rapidly approaching the land."

"Well, come, let's go and see and hear all about it," said Apperton—"pop on your 'things,' and we'll walk down to this new-fangled pier, and find out what it all means. There goes another gun."

Kate, who seemed to dread inaction, and sought, even in the little bustle of these uninteresting enquiries, a relief from the sameness of *home*—early days for such a feeling—was quite charmed with the proposal, and hurrying on her "things," as her husband called them, was ready in five minutes to take his proffered arm in the walk. The excitement of the arrival had spread, and numbers of people were flocking towards the chain-pier, which Apperton pronounced the only spot to see the fun, in which opinion Kate entirely coincided—he at that period not being aware, since he had never yet danced on its wires, that a small sum would be demanded, by way of toll, for his exhibition thereon.

It was curious to see the little struggle between pride and decorum, and ease and economy, while he exchanged a sixpence for the purpose of obtaining admission for himself and his wife. There was no hesitation as to the disbursement; but when he had lodged the balance, as he would have called it, in his coat-pocket, he could not stifle an expression of his belief, that the chain-pier must be a very good speculation, and of a wish that he had bought some shares in it when they were offered to him.

To have seen this bride and bridegroom pass along the esplanade on to the swinging floor of the picturesque toy, which has done more towards improving the appearance of dear ugly Brighton than any thing that has happened to it since its foundation, any body would have set them down for a long-married couple, and naturally have cast an eye behind for a group of nursery maids, and little "eyasses" under their care. Kate felt the influence of the sun and the sea breeze, and the exercise, and the general gaiety that surrounded her, and was quite in spirits; and her husband, to whom nautical matters were novelties, abstracted his thoughts for the moment from 'Change Alley

and Threadneedle Street, and felt temporarily interested in the spectacle.

"What is the ship?" said Apperton to one of the boatmen, who was in attendance in hopes of a job.

"She 's a Hingyman, sir," said the fellow.

"A Hingyman!" repeated Apperton. "Ah!"

"I suppose," said the man, "she didn't like coming through the Needles last night, and so com'd round outside by the back o' the Isle o' Wight, and made the land somewheres hereabout this morning. She'll send her purser ashore here, I dare say, sir, with the despatches, and mayhap some of the passengers."

Apperton's mind was instantly at work upon this information, in order to ascertain whether any early intelligence could be gathered from any of the people who landed, by which he might be able to make a hit in the market; but he was suddenly attracted from the dream of activity into which he had fallen, by recollecting that he had a wife, whom he could not decently quit at the moment, even though the riches of Golconda presented themselves to his view at the end of Leadenhall Street.

Meanwhile the platform at the pier-head became crowded; and Apperton, anxious to indulge himself with a peep at the "Hingyman," applied his eye to a glass which was most civilly offered him by a very respectable old man, and, having satisfied himself, was forthwith relieved of the odd twopenny worth of balance in his coat pocket. Again he stifled his resentment and mortification, and only murmured, "Dear peep, however," and drew away his lady, lest she should be seized with a desire of inspecting the vessel more minutely.

"That must be a profitable glass to that poor man," said Apperton. "Curious propensities people have — by waiting half an hour, they could see this ship as perfectly for nothing as they now do by paying for it; however, live and let live: it is an innocent way of making money, at all events."

Apperton, however, was not quite correct in his calculations on this point; the result did not by any means justify his anticipations: suddenly the sails of the "Hin-

gyman" were all aback, and a large shore-boat, which had gone off to her an hour before, was observed alongside rapidly filling with passengers, who were seen dropping into it from her sides. In a few minutes the "Hingy-man" filled again, and with a wind almost right aft, and yards nearly square, began bowling along on her way to Blackwall, leaving the boat, like a black speck upon the face of the water, behind her.

Upon this little tossing object all eyes were now fixed; and, after nearly another hour's suspense, she neared the shore. The crowds of sight-hunters had so thronged the railings at the pier-head, that Apperton and his lady had no chance of seeing the boat, or indeed what was landed from it; and as a *genteel* crowd is uniformly the most boisterous that can possibly be imagined, they withdrew their slender claims, and satisfied themselves with a side-long glance at the newly-arrived voyagers. The first who passed them was, as the barrowman anticipated, the purser, followed by two men conveying huge boxes of letters and despatches. To him succeeded an elderly gentleman, cheeks yellow, hair grey, and a pigtail fluttering in the breeze; wearing green spectacles, and a white hat, a great coat, nankeen pantaloons and gaiters, and carrying an umbrella: he was accompanied by a kitmagar in full costume, whose muslin shivered in the wind, and who chattered, like a parrot, a compound of all the languages of the East; then succeeded the two masters Mackirkincroft and their three sisters, with two or three ayahs, and a European servant, who appeared to devote his especial attention to Mrs. Mackirkincroft herself, evidently an invalid, and mother of the small brood of Mackirkincrofts now fresh imported.

At this period of the procession, one of the Brighton boatmen hailed a boy, who had just jumped ashore, and bid him go and get a fly for a gentleman in the boat. This to Apperton's unaccustomed ear sounded oddly; fly-catching, at that season, puzzled him; and his wonder was not decreased when he heard an additional direction given to the lad not to bring a horse-fly.

Kate saw the astonishment of her innocent husband, and forthwith proceeded to enlighten him; and by her ex-

planation of the fact, that the hireable carriages at Brighton, and now at all watering-places, are called "flies," not only relieved him from a strange mystification at the moment, but cleared up a doubt which had arisen in his mind in the morning, as to certain words painted on a railing, near the cliff, which ran thus:—"Not more than three flies to stand here." This had been a poser to him before breakfast; he could not at all comprehend it; but was yet too proud to endeavour to ascertain why there should not be sufficient room in Brighton for people and flies too; or why they should be so very particular as to the number of those little animals permitted to rest themselves in any one particular place.

The motley group of voyagers, amounting altogether to ten, I think, had reached the gates of the esplanade, whither the Appertons had followed them, before the arrival of the fly, which was destined to convey another of them from the pier. At length it came, and the pure spirit of curiosity prompted the newly married couple to see the magnificent nabob, who would not condescend to touch the earth with the sole of his foot, even though it were the free soil of Britain. However, the fly penetrated through the crowd, where they did not care to follow; so, on their return homewards, they permitted the important *qui hi* to pass them in his little vehicle. Any hope of a glimpse at his supereminence, however, was vain; the glasses were up, and the blinds down, so that, if the governor-general himself had landed, there could not have been much greater fuss about his being exhibited. Apperton and his wife, however, were followed in the course of the throng by two of the boatmen carrying baggage, and a European servant belonging to the great invisible.

"Your master seems pretty baddish," said one of the boatmen.

"I believe you," said the man; "I never expected he'd see England no more; howsumever, he's a vast sight better now than he was, and right glad he was to get ashore the first place as ever he could; it's his temper as has saved his life; he's the best-temperdest cretur as ever trod shoe leather."

The Appertons, quite contented with having heard this candid and satisfactory eulogium upon the invalid in the little coach, and not feeling particularly disposed to hear more of the details of his illness, or his virtues, made way on the *trottoir* for the persons who were descanting on them. The servant carried a dressing-case, and a pistol-case, and a carpet-bag: one of the boatmen carried a huge Indian basket full of linen, and another bag; and the other boatman a trunk, which appeared almost too heavy for his strength, to which was affixed a card, whereon was written the name of its proper owner.

Apperton, whose curiosity was very easily excited, stepped in advance of his wife two or three paces, and then turning to her with an expression of the most rapturous delight at having discovered what, in point of fact, did not appear likely to be the least interesting to him or her, said, "I have found out the name of the important personage."

"Have you?" said Kate, still looking towards the lessening ship, which was ploughing the waves; "and is he a prince in disguise?"

"No," said Apperton; "a plain officer in the army—Captain Somerford, of some regiment, I forget the number; 'passenger' is what is on the card."

"Somerford!" said Kate; not daring to take her eyes from the ship, which, if it before attracted her attention, had now become a thousand times more interesting—"Somerford!—good God—how very strange!" These were the only words that escaped her lips, but she felt at the moment as if she were petrified: no effort—no exertion could move her from the spot on which she stood. She grasped the coping of the wall to save herself from sinking on the pavement—to have stirred would have been to fall.

"Come, Kate, let us walk down once again," said Apperton, on the principle of having his two-pennyworth of promenade for his two-pence.

Her head grew dizzy: the dread of tears, which would have relieved her—the impossibility of answering Apperton—the consciousness that the mere effort to speak would

betray her, all overwhelmed her — she stood and trembled, and gasped for breath — to have seen, perhaps to have been seen, by Somerford — the only being on earth she loved — as the bride of Apperton — to confess she knew him — to acknowledge even the name, which, during all her husband's intimacy with her family, he had never heard mentioned — how to account for her trepidation, if asked about it — could she deceive so early the man she had married, and on such a point?

It was impossible her agitation should escape the notice even of Apperton, not ordinarily the most sensitive or quick-sighted person, especially where ladies were concerned.

"Are you ill, Kate?" said he.

"Yes," replied Kate; "a sudden giddiness and sickness — I ——"

"'T is the sea," said the unsuspecting husband: "the glare, and the noise, and perhaps the salt, and perhaps the sight of the sick man; — you 'll be better presently — try to walk a little."

Kate was thankful for the considerate choice of causes which Apperton had named, whence to select the origin of her malady, and admitted that she thought it *was* the glare of the sun upon the water, and that she *should* be better if they walked toward the Steyne, or the Parade, away from its influence; she, the good, the excellent, the amiable, high-principled Kate, not losing sight, in this proposition, of the probability of again seeing the vehicle which bore Charles Somerford, and of ascertaining, perhaps, in what direction he was going.

In this desire there mingled no feeling of which a vestal could disapprove; it was a solicitude for one who had been dearer to her than herself; the knowledge that he was near her, alive too, after the positive reports she had received of his death, revived ten thousand feelings in her heart, which she had promised herself never again should agitate her; yet now that she was married — that the hope of ever being Charles's was at an end, she felt that she should be happier if she knew all the particulars of his illness and his recovery — the place where he dwelt, and the care

under which he was placed. She felt, in short, the affection of a sister for him, and only regretted that the long concealment of his name had rendered it impossible to admit her intimate knowledge of him to her husband, without subjecting herself to a chain of endless enquiries, which, if she candidly replied to them, would unsettle the mind of her husband, and perhaps entail upon herself and her father a charge of concealment and duplicity.

In the midst, however, of such a conflict of feeling, it may easily be imagined that Kate did not find herself very much soothed or tranquillised by perceiving, that the house to which the boatman had recommended Somerford, as his residence, adjoined that which she and her husband occupied, and that the fly, relieved of its precious burthen, was actually standing at the door, while its late inhabitant examined the apartments, and decided whether he should take them or not.

Amongst all the combinations which appeared in progress for the discomfiture of Kate, and the derangement of the happiness of the honeymoon, this seemed the climax. Seeing Somerford was like an electric shock, but she had recovered from its startling effect; lodging him next door, with only a Brighton wall between them, was like putting on a perpetual blister (she thought technically); and she felt, that when her father and brother joined them, it would be quite impossible to remain such near neighbours without a *dénouement*, more especially as the houses they inhabited were graced with the once fashionable Brighton bay windows, which on either side commanded a view of a great portion of the adjoining drawing-rooms.

"By Job!" said Apperton, who always so called the mighty king of the gods; "but I say, Kate, the nabob's gone next door to us."

"So I see," said Kate.

"Shows ours is a fashionable part of the town; the grandees come amongst us," said the stockbroker.

The idea of the poor exiled Somerford being thus suddenly metamorphosed into a grandee almost made the bride smile.

"I suspect he is too unwell to have much choice left

him," said she; "it is rather the taste of the boatman who brought him ashore, than his own, which has been consulted."

"May be so," said Apperton, and the conversation dropped. They continued their walk along the cliff, to what is now the most fashionable part of Brighton, but which had scarcely grown so decidedly elegant five years since. Every thing amazed and surprised Apperton, to whom every thing out of the city was new and curious; but still he recurred every now and then to the sad state of things in London, and his sorrow that he had been obliged to leave it just as he did.

To Kate there appeared a strangeness in her change of situation, which she could hardly account for. There she was, the wife of Apperton, and, as far as his manners and conversation went, she might have been his wife for half a dozen years before. The ceremony, the journey, all the concomitant events, had occurred rather as if they had been matters of course, than indications of a total change of character and station; and the metamorphoses had been effected so tranquilly and so philosophically, that her marriage seemed more like a dream than reality.

The extraordinary coincidence of the arrival of Somerford, and the extremely inconvenient position which he had taken up, occupied much of her thoughts during the walk; all the painful regrets of losing him, and the melancholy pleasure of finding him still alive, gave way for the moment to the embarrassment which his vicinity to them caused. It made no very great difference while Apperton and she were alone there, because Somerford did not know the name of Apperton, and Apperton was equally unacquainted with that of Somerford; but when her father and brother, and Moss, arrived, the secret must inevitably out.

It was true, she was now the wife of another; and therefore her father could have no great cause for exhibiting an asperity of feeling towards Charles, which the idea of a marriage between him and Kate had formerly excited; but it seemed equally probable to Mrs. Apperton, that Somerford, now he had grown to "man's estate," had

obtained promotion in the army, and had run, as it appeared, a course of popularity in India, would feel his situation extremely different from that in which he found himself at the time of his departure; and she considered, that although indebted for his first start in life to her father, he might not be disposed, after the cavalier treatment he had subsequently received at his hands, to meet *him* so cordially as might have been wished: at all events, their juxta-position was a subject of incessant torment to her; and she was only divided in her mind between at once confiding the whole story to Apperton, or waiting till the arrival of the Maxwells to develope the mystery connected with their invalid neighbour.

It did not appear, however, very improbable, that her father might receive the intelligence, not only of Somerford's arrival in England, but of his actual domestication at Brighton, even before Kate could have an opportunity of confiding her thoughts and feelings to the old gentleman; for Maxwell would naturally be amongst the first persons to whom Somerford would write, seeing that now his mother was dead, the surgeon was almost the only person likely to feel any interest in his affairs.

The day closed, as even the saddest day will; and when the stillness of evening, unbroken by the dashing of the surf along the shore,—for it was calm,—had, as it were, set in, and while Apperton, brisk bridegroom as he was, was yawning and looking, first at his watch and then at his wife, Kate could not stop her ears to the sound of voices, which, thanks to the thinness of Brighton walls, were perfectly audible from the drawing-room of the adjoining house. The bell was heard—could she forget that it was rung by Somerford's hand? In the call of a servant, she distinctly recognised his voice; nay, she even heard his well-known laugh in reply to some observation, which, like the rest of the conversation carried on, was, though perfectly audible, quite indistinct.

"How plainly we hear those people in the next house," said Apperton: "we must take care and say nothing very loud here, that we don't want to be known all over the neighbourhood."

"One only hears a sort of murmuring noise," said Kate; "there is no distinguishing the words of a conversation."

"I suppose," said her husband, "it is that rich chap in the fly, talking over his perils and escapes on the voyage. I wish he lodged in this house — we 'd have asked him to tell us his history, just to pass away time; for I must say, Brighton *does* appear to me rather a dullish place, taken altogether."

"To you," said Kate, "accustomed to the constant bustle of business, it must appear so; but I should think a little relaxation will be serviceable to you. I know my father is never so well as here, when he can get time to run down for a few days; — but then, to be sure, his pursuits are different from yours."

"Why, so they are," said Apperton, "or rather were; for I believe I have bitten the old gentleman with the speculating mania: his mind is now almost as much occupied with city work as my own; and he will have cause to thank me for what I have done for him. Money, says some book that I once read, is like manure; stuck of a heap, it has a nominal value, and there an end; but scatter it, distribute it, spread it, and it not only retains its own value, but creates new sources of profit by the general fructification of the surrounding land."

"What! has my father been speculating, as you call it?" said Kate.

"He has made a good use of his money, under my direction," said Apperton. "If one thing happens, which cannot well fail of happening, he will, by this day three months, be worth a couple of hundred thousand pounds, Kitty."

"And if it should *not* happen?" asked Kate.

"It *must* happen!" replied the stockbroker.

"Well, then my father ought already to congratulate himself upon the vast addition you have enabled him to make to his fortune," said Mrs. Apperton.

"Why, not exactly *that*," said Apperton: "there *are* slips between the cup and the lip; and it is just possible — and that's all — that we may be beaten."

"And in *that* case——" said Katherine.

"Why, in that case," said her husband, "it will be time enough to consider what more can be done."

Short as was this conversation,—and this the first, too, which she had ever had with Apperton upon the subject,—it was of a nature to alarm and agitate her. She had heard, in common conversation, numerous remarks upon the enormous profits probably derivable from certain speculations, and she had seen Apperton exhibit with triumph sundry little square bits of paper, which he said were shares in this company, and bonds of that loan,—and she had never paid any great attention to the discussion; but now, from her husband's manner, and his restless desire to see her father, and his nervous anxiety about what was doing in the city, she began to fear that with her parent Apperton had been more successful in extolling these securities; and, although she, of course, was ill calculated for a judge in such matters, the exercise of her common sense induced her to look with doubt and trembling to any thing like an exchange of the savings of a long and active professional life, for a few bits of paper, conferring on the holder the privileges and profits of a proprietor in, perhaps, an extensive range of oxygen mines in the westernmost part of the kingdom of Utopia.

It is true, Kate had latterly remarked a change in her father's manner: he seemed to take less interest in the little amusements of his home than he formerly had done, and even the greater objects of his life were less assiduously attended to; but the alteration did not either alarm or grieve her, since she saw with it no alteration in his health or spirits; on the contrary, he appeared more lively than she had remembered him for some years.

The secret, whatever it was, of which she had accidentally become possessed, had evidently preyed upon his mind at an earlier part of the season, and he never recurred to it, however slightly, without a sort of shuddering which it was most painful for Kate to see excited: but even the effects of *that* seemed to have vanished; and, from different allusions made during his conversations with Apperton, she felt convinced that some new direction had been given

to his energies — some new excitement offered to his feelings; and after the brief remarks of her husband upon the present occasion, she assured herself that he was more deeply interested in the schemes of his son-in-law than, until this very evening, she had any idea of.

Shortly after this dialogue, the happy Apperton proposed retiring to rest; and, as if more pointedly and especially o harass and torment poor Kitty, precisely at the same hour did Captain Charles Somerford, next door, ring *his* bell, call his servant, and repair to his chamber for the night.

While Katherine, with the assistance of her maid, was disrobing, she could hear Charles giving directions to his servant, who was in the dressing-room beyond, in a tone of voice which augured well for his lungs, whatever might have happened to his liver, to have breakfast by ten; that Mrs. Mackirkincroft and Mr. Macleod were coming to partake of that meal, and to have whitings and prawns and a variety of other things ready, nothing of which in itself sounded particularly sentimental, but it recalled years of time gone by: it awakened ten thousand agonising feelings, not unmixed with a little worldly kindness, which made her grateful to Providence that one for whom she had cared so much was, after all the accounts she had heard of his death, well enough to make such things as prawns, whitings, and Mackirkincrofts, objects of his care and solicitude.

"That 's the gentleman just come from Hingy we hear so plain in the next house there," said Mrs. Alsop.

"We *do* hear very plainly, in these rooms, I think," said Kate.

"He's an uncommon nice gentleman, ma'am," said Mrs. Alsop: "his man was telling our William that he was not really ill, but weak like, and got a cold on his longs, and so they brought him up in a fly; but he is quite young, and, from what I could see of him, uncommon good-looking."

"You seem to have made yourself pretty well acquainted with the people next door, I think," said Mrs. Apperton, "considering the shortness of the time we and they have been here."

"Why you see, ma'am," said Alsop, "both these houses belong to the same missis; so there 's a door between 'em in the kitchens, and then, here it an't like London; all the doors open on the latch, and one runs up one area steps and down the other, and sometimes they come and borrow a light, or a drop of hot water from *us*, and sometimes I pop in, if we havn't a good fire in our room, and warm myself at theirs, so that it 's more like one house than two; so we know one another very soon in such places as these."

If any thing could have added to Kate's embarrassment, it was this ingenious statement of Mrs. Alsop's; whence she discovered, that, in point of fact, she and her rejected, yet fondly loved Somerford, were actually living under the same roof; and that however the name of Apperton might deceive him for a day or two, her *own* Charles must, in a short time, know the fact. Her concealment from her husband of the knowledge she had gained of his rival's proximity, although it appeared to her something like duplicity, was not of a very heinous nature, and she most assuredly would have been satisfied to continue it, but that, as I have said before, she foresaw the arrival of her father and brother must inevitably put an end to the delusion. To deny *then* that she knew who their neighbour was, would be a falsehood to which she could not stoop, more especially after the communication made by Alsop; while, on the other hand, she saw nothing but confusion, unsettling of minds, exciting doubts, and even jealousies, by confessing the whole story to her husband, who would naturally think the very worst of her former attachment to Somerford, from never having heard his name mentioned, or the slightest recurrence ever made to the circumstance, in a family proverbially open and ingenuous, and who boasted that they had no secrets from each other, always excepting professional ones.

In a temper of mind likely to be excited by these circumstances, superadded to a belief that Apperton had induced her father to hazard much more than he ought to have risked in the pursuit of speculations, the nature of which it was impossible he should comprehend, Mrs. Katherine

Apperton betook herself to her rest; and when she laid her head on her pillow to await her husband's approach, she discovered, by the sound of a slight cough with which Captain Charles Somerford appeared still to be afflicted, that her head was distant from *his*, about one inch more than the thickness of the wall which separated the houses.

In the midst of this combination of difficulties, Mrs. Alsop quitted her mistress for the evening; of course we must in delicacy do the same; and if the reader please, with the same amiable ceremony, of wishing her "a very good night."

Whatever might be the state of affairs at Brighton, the atmosphere of Burlington Gardens was none of the clearest: the family, unsettled and broken up, seemed divided into little factions; and on the very day when Somerford took up his abode close to the Appertons at Brighton, Moss, having despatched his brother to the Fens, dined away from Maxwell's by choice. Maxwell, the elder, had throughout the day displayed a degree of irritability very unusual with him, and evinced agitation and low spirits by turns. Any thing likely to disturb the perfect comfort and serenity of his evening, Godfrey Moss could not by any means endure; and he therefore accepted some invitation, or perhaps made one for himself, with a friend, which would carry him out of the influence of what he considered the surgeon's temporary ill-temper.

This, while it was extremely agreeable to Moss, was not less convenient to Edward, who, as it may easily be imagined, was particularly anxious to conclude the very interesting conversation which he had commenced with his father the previous evening, and which had so nearly arrived at its crisis when it was interrupted. The elder Maxwell, however, had throughout the day shown symptoms of ill-humour, which Edward feared might perhaps prevent the termination of his eulogy upon the unknown beauty, and his confession of having seen his respected parent enjoying a *tête-à-tête* with her.

But he was disappointed, and disappointed in a manner which surprised and astounded him. No sooner were the

servants withdrawn, and he was left with his father, than the old gentleman opened the subject himself.

"Edward," said Maxwell, "I have always thought, and not unfrequently said, that the romance of real life is more filled with extraordinary events, than the mind of the poet or the fabulous historian would imagine. Your beautiful vision is discovered to me, and by the merest accident."

"You know her then, sir?" said Edward.

"I do," said the surgeon; "and only this day, during all my acquaintance with her, did she mention the circumstance of your having preserved her life; for the strongest of all possible reasons; until yesterday, she was not aware that we were connected, or even acquainted with each other."

"She recognised me at church, then, I presume?" said Edward.

"Precisely so."

"Whither she had gone ——"

"At her own request, and by my permission, to witness the ceremony that made my daughter ——"

"The wife of Apperton," said Edward, who saw that his father was rather at a loss to finish the sentence. "But how," continued he, "how came you acquainted with her; and how should *she* be interested in what concerns my sister?"

"One who is warmly attached to *me*," said Maxwell, "cannot surely be indifferent to those who are so dear to me as Katherine is."

"Attached, sir!" said Edward.

"Yes, attached," replied Maxwell.

"And who is she?" asked Edward.

"That, my son," answered the surgeon, "you must never know."

"Never, sir!" exclamed Edward.

"Never," repeated Maxwell: "circumstances render it imperative on me to conceal her name, her prospects, her rank and station from *you;* a further connection with her would be destruction to us all. Shame and ignominy would fall upon you, and eternal ruin upon me."

"What! is she guilty then?" said Edward, "and have I ——"

"As pure as heaven's own spirits," said Maxwell; "exemplary in every relation of life, affectionate, kind, accomplished, amiable, and virtuous."

"And yet," said Edward, "danger and ignominy would follow a connection with her."

"I have said it," said Maxwell; "and you know, Ned, I seldom speak hastily, or even lightly."

"Is she yet unmarried?" said Edward.

"She is," replied his father.

"Where are her friends?" said Edward: "in pity tell me that."

"Never, never!" said Maxwell. "Nay, you must promise me never again to recur to the subject, never to mention her more."

"I have seen you with her in the open day," said Edward; "there can be nothing disgraceful in such an association, or you, with your high character, and placed in a situation of such delicacy as yours, would not have thus exposed yourself to the public eye in her society."

"You saw me with her," said Maxwell; "when — where?"

"Some few days since, in the Green Park," said Edward.

"You knew then of *my* acquaintance with her," said Maxwell: "tell me by what means — tell me, I entreat, I implore, I insist — by what means could you have discovered that I knew her?"

"By the simplest of all means," said Edward, "I saw you with her."

"Accidentally?" said Maxwell earnestly.

"Of course, sir," said Edward: "I had no clue to her, or I should have used it long before."

"And did you follow us?" said Maxwell.

"No, sir," said his son, "I did not," with an air of something which was meant for dignity, and to convey to his father a magnificent idea of high feeling, and being "very much above doing such a thing" as watch his parent under such circumstances; when, in fact, he knew he could not have kept them in view without being himself discovered.

"How comes it that you did not mention this before?" said Maxwell.

"I have had no opportunity," said Edward. "I assure you it has preyed heavily on my spirits: when I saw her in the church yesterday morning, I resolved not to sleep until I had come to an understanding with you on the subject; and, as you know, I actually begun a conversation, yesterday evening, when Moss and his brother came back from the play."

"She tells me," said Maxwell, "that her surprise, when she beheld *you* present, as part of Kate's family, was unbounded; and, as we agreed to-day, the combination of circumstances, which have jumbled us all together, is so far beyond the belief of common-place people, that, if it were written in a book, the reader would call it, if not impossible, at least too improbable to appear the least natural."

"And what *is* that combination, sir?" said Edward.

"Ned," said Maxwell, "it would be a happy day for me when I could explain the whole of the circumstances to you; at present, I have only to enforce upon you the obligation of silence. You have seen Maria——"

"Maria!—her name is Maria, then," said Edward; feeling that he had gained something, even by knowing so much more of her than he did before.

"Yes, yes," said Maxwell, looking foolish at having even gone the harmless length of letting slip the Christian name of the mysterious being who seemed to influence them all. "Maria; or, if it be not, it will serve as well as any other to think of her by; for I again repeat, that even her Christian name must never be mentioned."

"But am I then forbidden, if I see her accidentally, from speaking to her?" said Edward: "may I not, now that she knows my name and station, and, above all, knows that I have the recommendation of being your son, may I not prefer my suit?"

"Your suit!" said Maxwell; "call it your destruction, Ned. So long as the feelings and prejudices of society exist, a marriage with such a person, even in an ordinary case, would be ruinous; but in hers, one single step farther in your acquaintance plunges us all into ruin and destruction."

"All!" said Edward: "tell me that *I* alone shall sacrifice every hope, every prospect, but that of obtaining her, I'll risk them all."

"A general ruin would overwhelm us," said Maxwell: "believe me, if the case were not urgent, vital, I would not press this upon your mind; but I repeat, for the last time that I shall ever speak on the subject, any farther connection with that young woman would be destruction to us all."

"Answer me, father, as you claim my duty," said Edward, "is she, herself,—whatever may be the mystery that hangs over her,—free from stain and guilt?"

"I have already told you, Edward," said Maxwell, "that she is excellent and exemplary in every relation of life; but *you* must never see her more."

"Oh, father, father! what have I done to deserve this dreadful sentence?" exclaimed Edward.

"There is no fault on either side," said Maxwell: "you have been miraculously thrown together, who ought, of all other human beings, never to have met; and I would to heaven that I had checked her desire to see Kate's wedding, for had she not been present at that ceremony, we should have lived, and perhaps died, in ignorance of the real state of the case."

"No," said Edward, "after I had seen *you* with her, watched her anxiety until you came, her ease and happiness when you arrived, mingled with her watchfulness and evident fear of discovery, I could not have suffered the subject to rest until I had ascertained the fact."

"You have ascertained no particular fact now," said Maxwell; "nor will you ever ascertain more. I regret the circumstances bitterly; but there must be an end of it."

"But tell me, sir, what affairs, what business, could take this young lady on board a ship called the Wilhelmina, outward bound, commanded by a Captain Randolph."

"What!" cried, or rather screamed, the elder Maxwell, with a look so full of ghastly terror, that Edward trembled like a leaf to see his father so moved. "What ship! what captain! what are you talking of?"

"I mean, sir," said Edward, absolutely shaking with

alarm at the unusual agitation of his parent, "that in my pursuit of this young lady, I traced her to a ship so called, and so commanded. She stayed on board some time; but I eventually lost her, by her landing on the opposite bank of the river to that on which I had posted myself."

"The ship you spoke of has sailed," said Maxwell, coldly and sullenly.

"I know she has sailed from the river," answered Edward; "for she sailed that very night, and spoiled my errand when I went to look for her the next morning."

"Have no more such errands, Ned," said Maxwell: "the ship has nothing to do with Maria, nor Maria with the ship; but if she had, I should charge you upon your duty to stir no further in the pursuit, which, as I have said before, and now repeat, could only end in ruin to yourself, and destruction to your family."

"In all things, sir," said Edward, "that you command, I solemnly promise to obey you; but if I should accidentally see her, I cannot promise so rigidly to keep my faith as not to speak to her."

"You may speak to her as you please," said Maxwell, "whenever you see her again. I only bind you to silence on the subject here: as to any other part of your conduct, I lay no restriction upon it. I have put to you the danger and disgrace of a connection with her, forcibly and powerfully. I believed you when you pledged yourself to obey me; but before I put you to the test, she was so disposed of, that even if you should break your faith with your father, you could gain nothing from your mistress—YOU NEVER WILL—YOU NEVER CAN—SEE HER AGAIN."

After the conversation had reached this point, a calm suddenly succeeded. Edward, unable to endure what appeared to him the refinement of all earthly cruelty, rushed to his room; and his father, after congratulating himself upon the extraordinary discovery he had that day made, and the decisive measures which he had adopted to put an end to the affair, drank two or three glasses of wine hastily, and afterwards fell into a train of thinking which would not bear disclosure, but which pained and agitated him beyond description. From these reflections he was aroused

by Moss, on his return from his early dinner, whose only observation before he ordered his customary gin and water was, that Maxwell was a wise man to snooze by his own fireside on such a miserable night, and that it was lucky he had no company; for if he had, he would have thought it necessary, for the show of the thing, to have been "sent for" in a hurry, and have gone through the ceremony of driving three or four miles to some poor cretur of a patient who did not expect him, in order to exhibit to his guests the great extent of his practice, and the constant desire that there was for his services.

Edward did not re-appear during the evening, and Moss and Maxwell had a long *tête-à-tête* to themselves; but it was observable, that although the surgeon conversed with his companion upon every topic connected with the family, of the most secret and delicate nature imaginable, he never let fall one single syllable relative to Maria, the history and mystery of the good ship Wilhelmina, or her respectable master, Mr. Captain Randolph, of the Grange Road, Bermondsey.

CHAPTER III.

Now, in this dear embrace I lose the toils
Of ten years' war; absence, with all its pains,
Is by this charming moment wiped away.
All bounteous gods! sure never was a heart
So full, so blest as mine. THOMSON.

THE reader will perceive that the Maxwell family is getting into difficulties, and difficulties of a rather complicated nature; which, while they affect particularly every individual connected with it, seem to press upon it generally; and I am afraid, if I am thoroughly candid, that I must prognosticate, as people do regarding ladies under particular circumstances, that they must be worse before they are better.

It is odd enough, that the *dénouement* of Maria's story,

and the unexpected arrival of Somerford, should have excited in the breast of Edward a feeling of resentment against his father's present needless cruelty, and revived in the bosom of Katherine all the sorrows she had felt, when, upon a former occasion, he had acted in a similar manner towards herself. The surgeon's family practice was certainly none of the tenderest; a decisive *cut* seemed the principle of action; immediate separation, without the ceremony of parting, appeared to be his universal panacea; and as he had, ten years before, carried off Charles Somerford, and embarked him in the Honourable Company's ship Mulligatawny, to put an end to his acquaintance with his daughter, so it appeared to his son he had, in this case, actually kidnapped the delicate Maria, and transported her for life on board the Wilhelmina, Captain Randolph, in order to conclude the connection between her and his son.

The ardent lover, however, nothing daunted by the *veto* of his father, and confiding somewhat in the leniency which the old gentleman exhibited in the case of Miss Epsworth's defection, resolved, that if the Wilhelmina was yet at any of the outports, thither would he transport himself; and if it were true, that under any circumstances the lovely girl had been induced or compelled to quit England, or if business or pleasure, whichever it might be, had actually led her to abandon the shores of what he concluded to be her native country, equally true should it be found, that he had accompanied her—ay, to the farthest verge of the world;—such is the force of first impressions—such the power of woman!

Full of this determination, Edward directed his servant to prepare a portmanteau for a journey; in what direction he should go would be determined by the intelligence he might, during the following day, acquire: and having selected all the valuable articles of which he was possessed, in the way of snuff-boxes, chains, rings, and other personals, he reckoned up his stock of cash in hand, and found himself master of some seventy pounds, amounting to nearly the fourth part of the annual allowance which his father made him, and which, since candour upon all family matters is absolutely necessary, amounted to four hundred

pounds per annum, exclusive of all tradesmen's bills, which the old gentleman annually paid, and the free quarters (or what in Ireland is called the "run of his teeth") which were available to himself and any of his acquaintance in his father's house.

In the morning, when he arose and saw his trunk filled for the expedition, and reflected, moreover, that he was about to take a step which would indubitably separate his father and himself for ever, he felt, for the first time, doubtful whether he should pursue the bright vision any farther. He had been told by his parent, that ruin and disgrace would be the consequences of any connection with the young lady; he had himself seen her accosted by people of most suspicious appearance, and, as he afterwards discovered, not of the most respectable profession; there was also a degree of trickery in her escape from his pursuit at the Golden Cross, which could only have been carried into effect by a person intimately acquainted with the *locale* of a London stable-yard; all this he admitted to himself, and admitted, that even their first interview took place in a part of the metropolis where it was extremely improbable a young lady of any very great respectability would have been found, unaccompanied by a protector, and unattended by a servant; but even these reflections, however much, for the moment, they might damp, could not extinguish, the desire he felt to prosecute his search after her; for although what he had collected in his mind to serve as reasons for not pursuing her was plausible and rational enough, still, if her associates at one period were disreputable, his father had himself been her companion at another; that father, too, who, even *now*, declared that she was virtuous and exemplary in all the relations of life, and yet that she must infallibly entail disgrace and ruin upon his entire family if she became connected with them.

Upon the fact of her being alone when he first saw her, which always weighed upon his mind, and which, as a feature of the case, was constantly open to the satire of Moss, he was inclined to lay less stress than many other people might have been; for he was aware, mixing, as he did, pretty generally with society, that the wives, nay, the

unmarried daughters, of highly respectable people are permitted by their parents and connections to go shopping, or calling on friends, or visiting bazars, or benefitting their health, without any servant or attendant. It is true, that such laxity produces, in many instances, promiscuous flirtations in the streets; sometimes assignations in the Park, and occasionally, perhaps, worse consequences; but habit and custom reconcile the strangest incongruities, and the wealthy tradesman, or even the professional man of moderate pretensions, sees neither fear nor danger in sending his daughters (or even one, which, for various reasons, is a thousand times worse,) adrift upon the *pavé*; and if they return, as they almost invariably do, safe home in time to dress for dinner, the adventures in which they may have been engaged during the morning's stroll, never being suspected by their parents, are never enquired after; and the young ladies proceed upon another healthful excursion the next day, provided the weather be fine, and the streets dry. The thing that chiefly mystified Edward was the connection which somehow existed between this dangerous delightful creature and his family; for, having perfect faith in his father's assurances of her goodness and propriety, backed, as they were, by the fact of his having publicly walked with her in the streets of London, in the open glare of day, it was quite clear, from the interest he took in her, and from the fact of her having been present at his sister's wedding, that she must be somehow most interestingly mixed up with all their proceedings.

He once glanced at the possibility that she might be the daughter of his father, and not of his mother—but the high character which it was essentially necessary his respected parent, in *his* profession, should maintain, put that supposition quite out of the question; so, after debating, and worrying, and torturing himself for a considerable length of time, he came back to his first resolution of searching for her, it appearing to him absolutely necessary to his peace and comfort, putting the love and romance out of the question, to ascertain who she actually was.

Having, therefore, made his disposition above stairs, and made up his mind to another visit to Bermondsey after

breakfast, to ascertain from his fair friend with the cockatoos where the good ship Wilhelmina actually was, and when she was positively to sail, the young gentleman proceeded to the breakfast parlour, where he found his father in a state of any thing but placidity.

Before him, on the table, lay the newspaper, announcing a second great failure in the city — a letter from Apperton, entreating him to come off forthwith to Brighton — and a list of shares, exhibiting a most tremendous fall in one of the joint stock companies, in which Apperton was principally embarked, and in which it seemed but too probable he had committed the surgeon.

"We must go to Brighton to-day, Ned," said Maxwell.

"Brighton!" exclaimed Edward: "is any one ill?"

"Ill at ease, Apperton appears," replied Maxwell: "he wants to see me, and he cannot leave Kate — so we will be off after breakfast. I must write some few letters of apology to some patients, and — I must return to town in three or four days — but it is best to go."

"I am afraid," said Edward, "I shall not be able to go so soon as to-day — I ——"

"Law business, I presume, keeps you," said his father, ironically.

"No," replied Edward; "but I have some engagements which ——"

"You must put off, as I shall put off mine," said Maxwell.

"I will endeavour to do so," said Edward, taking up the newspaper, and glancing his eyes in all directions to discover the "ship news," where he anticipated some intelligence might be found about the Wilhelmina, on board of which he had made up his mind his fair friend was actually stowed.

"Have you seen Moss?" said Maxwell.

"No, sir," replied Edward.

"I suppose we must take him with us, or Kitty will be quite disappointed," said Maxwell.

"A short honeymoon seclusion Apperton makes of it," said Edward, smiling.

"Honey," said Maxwell, with an expression of coun-

tenance indicative of his knowledge that Apperton's happiness must be in no small degree deteriorated by the events which were going on in the city.

"By Heavens! see this," exclaimed Ned; "did you read the ship news, sir?"

"Not I," said Maxwell; "ship news does not interest me,—what is it?"

"Listen," said Edward, and read as follows:—"Brighton:—yesterday morning, the Hon. Company's ship Lady Simkins was off this place, where she landed her purser, who set off immediately for London with the letters and despatches. She also landed some passengers, and, after remaining in sight upwards of three hours, proceeded on her way to the river."

"Prodigiously interesting, upon my word," said Maxwell; "if Lady Simkins herself, who is some slop-selling director's wife, I suppose, had been there instead of her cumbrous namesake, I should have been quite as much edified."

"Nay, but the point, sir," said Edward; "you hav'n't come to the point."

"Well," said his father, "pray go on then; let's hear the point."

"Names of passengers landed," said Edward:—"The Hon. Alexander Snob Macleod, Secretary to Government in the Twanky-twaddle department of the twenty-four Pergunnahs: Mrs, Mackirkincroft, wife of his Excellency Hildebrand Hogg Mackirkincroft, Governor of Palamabog, and five children."

"Well," interrupted Maxwell, "any more of them?"

"Yes, one," said Edward, "Captain Charles Somerford, of H. M. forces, from the Cape of Good Hope."

"Somerford home!" exclaimed Maxwell: "why he has been dead these six months."

"Then he has come to life again," said Edward; "for here he is in black and white."

"And at Brighton, too," said Maxwell: "I suppose merely for a few hours. I shall, no doubt, hear from him,—Somerford—good heavens! how strange!"

And hereabouts the old gentleman fell into a sort of reverie, from which he presently awoke.

"Why, then, all the reports of his death at the Cape must have been false."

To this remark, the very natural result of a conclusion to which the elder Maxwell had rationally enough come, upon finding the young object of his former interest, hopes, and suspicions, alive and merry, Edward did not pay quite so much attention as filial duty might justly have extracted; and perhaps the reader may already guess why: it was no neglect of proper respect, nor, indeed, was it from any want of interest in a matter which he knew could not fail very deeply to interest his sister, but it was, because under the same head of "*Ship News*," which he mechanically read to its end, he saw the words which follow:—"Portsmouth:—sailed the Hero, Smith, for Boston, and the Wilhelmina, Randolph, for Bombay."

The last words fixed his eyes and riveted his attention; all his speculations about Maria as connected with that vessel were at a glance overturned. The ship to which he fancied her conveyed had sailed two days before, and she had been in his father's society only yesterday.

This new mystification, however, had one good effect, it rendered needless his fly-away trip to the outports; and, moreover, made his journey to Brighton less objectionable. He resolved, however, to take no notice of the event to his father, and almost consoled himself with the belief that the declaration made by the old gentleman on the preceding evening, that he never should, and never *could*, see Maria more, amounted to little else than one of the finely rounded periods with which it is considered good taste, by an angry parent, to conclude an interesting conversation with a refractory child.

"I wonder if Kate will see Somerford," said Maxwell, reverting to the curious coincidence of his arrival: "had she heard of his death, do you know, Ned?"

Edward, who at the moment being a good deal involved in his own affairs, forgot exactly whether it had been agreed between Kate and himself to deny or admit this knowledge, hesitated for a moment in his answer: but as he really *was* puzzled, he resolved to make a merit of necessity and try the truth, as having at all events as good a chance as any thing else; and he admitted that she had.

"Then," said Maxwell, "the surprise will be the more striking if they meet; and as Apperton has most assuredly never heard Somerford's name mentioned, it will altogether appear very extraordinary to him; but, God knows, he has enough to think of just now, besides little punctilios or delicacies, in which, at the best of times, he is no very scientific person."

"It is strange," said Edward, making a plunge at a novel reflection, "how readily people repeat and disseminate falsehoods. I shall be very glad to see Somerford again."

"I have no objection to see and receive him as usual," said Maxwell. "I should have strong objections to him as a connection, although I believe, in every moral point of view, the young man is unexceptionable: he seems to have been successful in promotion, and yet purchase with *him* must be out of the question."

"I suppose the old Oriental wish of bloody wars and sickly seasons has been realised in his case," said Edward.

"And so, then, Master Ned," said Maxwell, in a tone half-playful and half-solicitous, "you are made the depository of Kate's secrets."

"Of all, I verily believe," said Edward; "I don't think she ever conceals any thing she knows from me; although I must admit that her confidence has only latterly been so implicitly extended to me."

"What, Edward!" said his father, fixing his eyes steadily on his son, "does she confide *all* that is confided to her to you?"

"All, sir," said young Maxwell, "with one exception —the secret she discovered when she went unadvisedly into your room; upon that, I have tried her again and again, tempted her with secrets of my own, frightened her, threatened her, but all to no purpose; whatever it was she saw upon that occasion I know not, but she is there immovably close."

"She is a good girl, and I was right in my opinion of her," said Maxwell: "the secret, abstractedly, is about as important as that of freemasonry; but since she was intrusted with it, as the test of her sincerity, it has become

no doubt her pride, as well as her duty, to keep it as inviolably."

"Why I must do her more justice than that," said Edward; "for by the way she alludes to the subject, it should seem that the secret *is* something more than a test, especially as it was one she accidentally discovered, and which was certainly not offered to her."

"Let me hear no more about it, Edward," said Maxwell. "Kate rashly intruded, and saw what she most certainly should not have seen; but as I have interdicted the subject, I trust you will abstain from bringing it to her recollection, as rigidly as she refuses to satisfy your curiosity."

"Well, sir, I cry a bargain," said Edward, "and here it is: tell me some little more of Maria, and the other story never shall be thought of by me; tell me what it is you mean by saying that I never shall, and never can, see her more?"

"What I have said is the truth," answered Maxwell: "she is beyond your reach, beyond your ken—and I repeat, you never can behold her again."

"Then she has *not* sailed in the Wilhelmina," said Edward.

"*I* never said she had sailed in any ship," replied Maxwell; "you started the story about a ship, to which you told *me* you had traced her: I know nothing of that part of her history; but to save you all further anxiety, I repeat to you, upon the honour of a gentleman, that neither will *you* ever see her again, nor, to the best of my belief, shall I."

"This is a most perplexing, most provoking mystery," said Edward.

"Oh, come none o' your mysteries, Master Neddums," said Moss, entering the room in a pace something between hobbling and rolling. "Let's have the muffins now, and leave the mystery till after breakfast."

"What d' ye think, Moss?" said the elder Maxwell.

"Of nothing but breakfast," said Moss.

"Charles Somerford is returned alive and merry, as far as I know," said Maxwell.

"Well, I'm glad o' that too, poor boy," said Moss: "I wish he had been here a month sooner."

"But where do you think he *is?*" said Edward.

"How should I know?" said Moss. "Have you rung for the muffins?"

"At Brighton at this very minute," exclaimed the elder Maxwell.

"Better and better," cried Moss.

"Where, please God, we shall all be, by this day's dinner time," said the surgeon.

"What, going to travel?" cried Godfrey, "me and all! Have up the cold meat—let's lay a good foundation, and to-day's as good a day as any other. What! is Kittums tired of her husband, or is the stock-brokering cretur tired of her? eh! I knew how long the honeymoon would last."

"It is business which induces me to visit him so early after his marriage," said Maxwell.

"Oh, I dare say," said Moss; "some of the famous air-bubble concerns are going to burst, are they?—some new South Sea affair."

"Never mind what it is," said Maxwell, who repressed Godfrey's energetic denunciation of all the financial quackeries of the day, with something more of earnestness than usual. "Whatever it is, it is to my advantage to see Apperton; and therefore I am sure you will not oppose my going, nor refuse to accompany me."

"Not I, Mack," said Moss; "*your* carriage, *your* post-horses, your time, and your convenience—of course; name your hour—(ring again for the muffins, Ned,)—and I'll be ready—my wardrobe, as you know, does not take long packing. And are you to be of the party, Neddums?"

"Yes," said Maxwell, "he is. The fact is, I could not well go without him; for if Apperton should be obliged to run up to town, there would be nobody to take care of Kate in her walks and excursions, for I am soon tired of such expeditions now."

"Who knows, Ned, but you may find your Long Acre Venus there, going back every morning to the sea, whence she rose?" said Moss.

"For *my* part," said Edward, "I really do not see how I can contrive to get off the engagements I have made; I ——"

"Say to your friends," said Maxwell, "that your father wishes you to accompany him to Brighton; if they are friends worth having, they will not be offended at your obedience to a parent's wishes."

It was clear that Brighton was the point at which they were all fated to arrive by dinner time. Edward's portmanteau was already packed and prepared, but he little thought, when he gave the directions for getting it ready, what its destination was to be. However, as he clearly saw his going was inevitable, he made the best of it; and, as it may be imagined, very easily got rid of a string of engagements, which had, in point of fact, existed only in his own mind.

Matters being thus arranged, and the carriage ordered at one, Edward announced his readiness to attend his father, and was rewarded by the old gentleman with an affectionate shake of the hand. The surgeon proceeded, in his town chariot, to extricate himself from his professional entanglements for two or three days; and at a very few minutes after the appointed time, the trio took their departure from the metropolis.

Strange things had been doing during the morning at the place to which they were going, and strange things yet remained to be done; but no matter—we must wait with patience the due developement of events, which, however, the reader may already begin to anticipate.

It would be treason to Mrs. Apperton to dilate much upon the nature of her feelings with regard to Somerford, since it is an unquestionable fact, that she had determined to overcome and conquer them; but it would be wilfully concealing truth, which ought to be told, to pass over in silence the dreadful struggle which the conflict cost her.

A thousand times during the night did she regret that she had not, at once, admitted to Apperton her acquaintance with Charles, explained the nature of their connection and intimacy, and referred to it as a mere matter for conversation now that years had rolled away, and that the

change of circumstances had made her the wife of another —but she had not done so: at the moment of Apperton's discovery of Somerford's name upon the trunk, she lost her presence of mind, and gave, by concealment, an air of guilt and mystery to an occurrence, which, if told at once, would have proved only one of thousands of instances which every day turn up, where young lovers, in early life, are rejected for want of the ostensible means of maintaining an establishment, and educating a family. The feelings under which Kate suffered are not to be described. As for rest, she had none; and it must have been clear to her husband, if he had turned his thoughts into that channel, that her disquietude and evident unhappiness must have had some more serious causes than those to which she had attributed them; namely, fatigue and over-exercise during the day.

She rose from her bed unrefreshed and feverish. When she proceeded to breakfast, she beheld, under the windows, and before the door of the adjoining house, an absolute cavalcade of donkeys and ponies, covered with Mackirkincrofts, the mother endeavouring to preserve order amongst the young "natives," while the well-powdered Mr. Macleod was making the amiable to her, after the fashion of 1792. At this juncture she again beheld Somerford, who was amusing himself by pelting the children with pellets of bread, and making himself, in various ways, as agreeable as possible to his newly-arrived guests, who shortly after entered the house, and proceeded to breakfast, while the younger scions betook themselves on an excursion to the Downs for health and exercise.

Charles Somerford appeared to Kate to have grown since they parted,—he was certainly taller, and most certainly much handsomer: his features, which were regular and well formed, had assumed a more intellectual expression, and the pallid hue of ill health gave to his intelligent eyes a brightness and power, which were full as fascinating as they ought to have been to Kate under the circumstances. His figure altogether was improved, and his manner, and the ease which an association with the world had given him since their separation, had so greatly added to the powerful attractions which he even before possessed,

that Mrs. Apperton's self-reproaches for having consented to abandon the hope of being his, were as painful almost as the exercise of that self-constraint, which perpetually reminded her that she was actually — another's.

"Kate, dear," said Apperton, in a voice of kindness which sounded as unmusical to her ears as the croaking of a frog, or the drone of a bagbipe, "things look up in the city; my letters, this morning, speak of more failures; but in *our* affairs, — I mean your father's and mine, — we are doing prodigiously well, and all our hopes will be realised."

"But they will come to us to-day?" said Kate.

"Oh, I conclude they will," said Apperton; "I begged your father to come, and Ned, I am sure, will not let him come alone."

"And Mr. Godfrey Moss," said Kate, "will not let himself be left alone; so we shall have the whole party."

"I have arranged about the beds, Kate," said Apperton; "there are two rooms in this house for your father and Ned, or Moss, whoever prefers sleeping here, and one bedroom the mistress of the house has let me have next door. So there'll be no puddling about at night to a distant sleeping place. I hate that sort of breaking up — it would not suit Mousetrap to have far to puddle; but by this arrangement, for which I hope you give me credit, we shall all be together."

"Yes, I see," said Kate, "very convenient, indeed: is the Indian gentleman going away, then?"

"No — oh, no!" said Apperton, "he stays; he occupies only the front room, and dressing-room up stairs; so that Moss, or Ned, can have the back room in that house; a very nice comfortable place too — I've been looking at it."

At this period of the conversation the jingle of a Brighton piano-forte resounded in the adjoining drawing-room; and after some little preparation, Kate had the satisfaction of hearing Captain Charles Somerford play upon the flute (an instrument on which he was a capital performer), two or three airs which she had given him years before, and which, from their order of performance, she was pretty well convinced were actually read from the

book into which she had copied them, and which the well-known sounds, by a natural association of ideas, brought before her eyes as plainly as if she were singing from it herself. The accompaniment was evidently furnished by Mrs. Mackirkincroft, and no doubt the breakfast was made up for the purpose of trying these little "snatches" together, about which, Charles had probably been talking during the voyage, when no instrument was at hand.

"Musical, too," said Apperton; "why, Kate, if we strike up an acquaintance with our high and mighty neighbour, you'll be quite in your element; but I suppose it isn't the fashion to be sociable at these watering places."

Poor Mr. Apperton might, just at that moment, have supposed any thing he pleased, for his lady was so entirely engrossed with the combination of events which were occurring, that she was insensible to his observation, pertinent as it was. She felt herself like a poor isolated wretch, standing on the very edge of a whirlpool, towards which she was gradually drawn, and in which she fully anticipated destruction. Apperton's second appeal, and invitation to walk, roused her, and she prepared to obey and attend him: but she moved mechanically. One sole object engrossed her thoughts and mind, and she neither could see, nor hear, nor think of any thing else.

The walk was commenced, — and, must I confess, — I suppose so, — that the dignified, well-regulated, high-minded Mrs. Katherine Apperton, as she left the house, leaning, too, on her husband's arm, condescended (degraded herself would be the word with very high-flying ladies) so far, as to cast her eyes towards the windows of Somerford's room, and that, too, in the hope of again seeing him. She, however, was disappointed; and the deserted appearance of the windows and balcony, induced her to believe that the whole breakfast party had gone forth to take their exercise. Now, then, even getting away from home did poor Kate no good; for whatever advantageous effect the change of scene, or the exercise, or the air, or the amusement, might produce upon her health and spirits, the constant dread and apprehension of meet-

ing Somerford at every corner she turned, effectually counterbalanced it. Her existence was one constant flutter; and, as I have already said, that her embarrassment escaped the observation of her husband, she might have been thankful to bonds, shares, premium, and discount, and other *more* interesting matters, which kept his mind fully occupied at this particular crisis.

His anxiety in this respect, however, was productive of a scene after all. He was particularly desirous of seeing the newspapers of the day, which he had been told would be in a particular coffee-room at one o'clock. From what he should see proclaimed in the "City article" of one of these journals, he could pretty well judge how to direct the proceedings of the next morning by that night's post. It would, besides, relieve his anxiety, and make him a more agreeable companion for the rest of the day, that is, if the accounts were favourable; and if truth were told, few thing could have occurred which would have had the effect of making him less pleasant; and therefore Kate was as anxious that he should go to this coffee-room in time, where he had been promised a sight of the paper, as he himself could possibly be; and accordingly, at his suggestion, she deposited herself in Mr. Tuppen's library, (to which they had subscribed in order to be put in print amongst the "Arrivals,") and taking her seat at a large baize covered table, plentifully strewed with periodical works, told her "better half" that she would wait his return, but that if he should be detained beyond the period he expected, or longer than she felt comfortable in her resting-place, if he would proceed homewards, he would there be sure to find her.

Under this agreeable domestic arrangement, away went Apperton, hoping, yet dreading, to see the ruin or exaltation of his fortunes, in the columns of the "Times;" leaving Kate huddled up, as it were, within herself, in an agony of distracting doubt and uncertainty.

Whether what followed was the result of accident or sympathy, I do not pretend to say; or whether, which I confess I doubt, Mrs. Apperton had seen Captain Somerford in the library before he saw her; but certain and true

it is, that Apperton had not reached the corner of the Steyne, which it was his intention to cross, before Kate perceived, with a feeling far beyond my power of description, that the eyes of her once fondly-beloved Charles Somerford were riveted on her.

The expression of his countenance combined joy with doubt — he seemed to think it could not be, and yet to be assured it was, the object of all his hopes and wishes; — the conflict was but of short duration — in half a minute he was at her side.

"Katherine!" said Somerford — "is this possible — can it be you? Providence smiles on us after all; to think that I should have landed here yesterday, and to find you — you, whom of all human beings I was most anxious to behold."

"For mercy's sake, Charles," faltered Kate, "don't, pray don't, speak so loud — these people will see — will hear."

"Well," said Charles, "what care I who hears or who sees — let them know the whole history — let them know, that I am come to prove my constancy and affection for the dearest being that ever lived, and that, unlike the general race of gentlemen in my condition, fortune has favoured me ——"

"Fortune," said Kate, her eyes filling with tears — "Oh! Charles, take me out of this place — I shall faint — I am giddy — sick."

"This way — come into the air," said Somerford; "take my arm — dearest — dearest — this cannot be reality — it is too much happiness for me to enjoy."

He offered his arm, which she almost unconsciously took; indeed, if she had not taken it, she would scarcely have been able to support herself; they reached the railings on the Cliff, where she stopped a few moments, to imbibe the fresh air and rally her spirits.

"And where is your father?" said Somerford — "quite well? — and Ned grown a man, I suppose?"

"I expect them here to-day," said Katherine.

"I did not write," continued Somerford, "for I proposed going on to London to-morrow; but the surprise I

intended has properly recoiled on myself, and you have had all the merit of startling *me*. Oh! Kate, when we were so suddenly and unexpectedly separated, I thought my heart would have burst; but I suppose it was right, and all for the best, at least, there is no use in looking back to days of sorrow: the sky has brightened, and my success and some fortunate expeditions, my promotion, and my expected exchange into another regiment, with a majority, have altered the face of things, and I can now come forward in a different way, and in a somewhat better character, to claim the hand of her I love. I have had, however, a narrow escape with my life, and, indeed, so many things to tell you, that I scarcely know where to begin. Why Kate — dearest," said he, seeing her tears fall in torrents, "you do not seem to participate in my joy — have I lost that place in your heart, to claim which, fondly and proudly I have now returned, after years of struggling and discomfort, endured with that one bright object in view?"

"Surely, surely," said Kate, overcome with the wretchedness of her situation, and lost to the fact that she was become an object of curiosity to the passers by, "you might have written during this long period, if — if ——"

"Written! my beloved girl," said Somerford; "of what use was my writing? You had yourself desired me not to write — you had interdicted the correspondence."

"I, Charles!" said Mrs. Apperton.

"So your father wrote me word, Kate," said Somerford; "told me that your wish was to leave our intimacy as it was, and that if hereafter circumstances should prove favourable, and I should return in a situation to renew our connection, it should, as it were, begin afresh; that we were too young at that period to judge fairly of each other's qualifications, and that it would be idle and ungenerous to maintain a correspondence as lovers, which might bind us to each other, and yet never turn out satisfactorily."

"If my father wrote *that*," said Kate, "I never sanctioned it, and he has much to answer for. My beloved mother, during her lifetime, expressed much surprise at the cessation of your correspondence, and she — she," said Kate, "was your best and warmest friend in our family;

but when *she* died, your name was interdicted in our house, and years have elapsed since it has been breathed by any one of us, excepting myself in sorrow and in solitude."

"But now, Kate," said Somerford, "all our cares are ended; all our solicitude is over. Who are you staying with? where are you living? tell me all. Your father will now doubtlessly receive me with kindness; and you know you used always to say, that I never suffered anger and resentment to last in my heart. I shall forget all that is past, and seek the sole object of my ambition fairly and openly at once."

"Oh, Charles, Charles!" sobbed Catherine, "I cannot —my tongue cleaves to my mouth—I want breath. I never, never can say the word."

"Speak! speak! dearest, dearest, Kate," said Somerford, drawing her closer to him as they walked. "There is nothing you can tell, that can give *me* pain. No, I know your heart too well."

"Indeed you know nothing of the horror that impends," said Mrs. Apperton. "Charles! I am guilty, doubly guilty; and now, at this moment, guiltier yet than ever I thought myself capable of being. I shall fall—I shall die here in the open street—I cannot support myself."

"What *has* happened? tell me, Kate," said Somerford. "What can have happened? No calamity—no."

"Oh! worse, worse than death," said Kate. "I am lost, sunk, degraded in my own eyes; debased, wretched, wretched, wretched creature that I am! Take me home, Charles. Leave me, leave me; never see me more. I scarcely know what I am saying; my father has played a cruel game. He has ruined my happiness for ever."

"Why, Kate," said a shrill voice, in a tone of unusual gaiety, close behind them, "I have been hunting you about like a leetel hare; where have you been, Kitty?"

"Who is this man?" said Somerford; "do you know him?"

"Know—oh yes!" said Kate; "I—I—found the library so hot and close, that I—I—came out——"

"Bless me!" said Apperton, looking at Somerford. "Why, I believe, sir, we are neighbours. I had the plea-

sure of seeing you, for a moment, when I was looking at the bedroom in your house this morning. I am sure I am very much obliged to you for taking care of Kitty. Hey, Kitty — what, not very ill — eh?"

"No, no," said Kitty, "not very ill. I — I — am extremely obliged to this gentleman for his attention." For, at this moment, Kate was so completely overcome by the difficulties of her situation, that she could not make up her mind either to introduce Apperton to Somerford, as her husband, or to introduce Somerford to Apperton as an old acquaintance of hers: the consequence was, that Apperton thought Somerford a particularly free and easy gentleman, whose very particular attentions to Kate seemed in no way disagreeable to her, while Somerford was very near being extremely rude to Apperton, whose interference with Miss Maxwell he thought excessively vulgar, and entirely misplaced.

"You know Kate, sir," said Apperton.

"I have had that honour many years, sir," said Somerford.

"Why, Kate," said Apperton, "you did not say that you knew Captain Somerford when I read his name on the trunk."

"No, I — it did not strike me at the moment," said Mrs. Apperton; "one sees so many people in the course of a season, and then we lose sight of them in — this — in short, it did not occur at the moment. I ——"

Her look to Somerford convinced him that there was a deep and serious mystery in all this affair; although such was his confidence in her fidelity, that his thoughts never once took the right current, and her delicacy was such, that she had not courage to criminate herself by announcing the fact.

"I am very glad," said Somerford, "that I had the pleasure to be near you when you were taken ill; I think you would have been seriously unwell, if you had remained in that hot library."

"And I am sure I am very much obliged to you, sir, for your attention," said Apperton. "Come, Kate, we had better go towards home."

"Yes, I think so," said Kate, who at this moment was walking in that direction, between her first lover and her present husband.

"Kate," said Somerford in a whisper, which the noise of the carriages, and the dash of the surf together, rendered inaudible to Apperton, "cannot you get rid of this fellow? Who is he? Some friend of your father's? He's a great bore. Make some excuse, and shake him off. I'll tell him some——"

"Hush! hush!" said Kate, pressing his arm in order to check the disposition to be uncivil, which it was quite clear Charles Somerford felt.

"Good news from London for me," said Apperton; "funds up as I want them; three eighths yesterday, and one per cent. the day before;—that will do, Kate."

"What! are you turned stockbroker, Kate?" said Somerford.

"Mr. Apperton is," said Kate, drawing the conversation to the point she so much dreaded.

"Introduce me," said Charles; "civility costs nothing; a friend of the family ought to be known by me."

"I believe, Mr. Apperton," said Kate, "I ought to introduce you to Captain Somerford, since he is *my* acquaintance, in due form."

"Sir," said Apperton, taking off his hat, and bowing, "I am very glad to have the pleasure of knowing you. Tedious voyage, sir? Fine weather home?"

"I came," said Somerford, "in the ship whence I landed yesterday, only from the Cape of Good Hope, where I had been staying some time for the benefit of my health."

"And where," said Kate, "I heard you had died."

"Indeed!" said Somerford; "I assure you that is not the fact, for here I am in *propriâ personâ*; we have been ten weeks coming from the Cape, having touched at St. Helena and Ascension. Don't you recollect, Kate, how we talked about St. Helena before I went out? and when I saw it, and saw Buonaparte's tomb—it brought all our conversation so fresh to my memory!"

"Oh, Kate," said Apperton, "you knew Captain Somerford before he went out first?"

"Before I went any where, I should say, sir," said Somerford.

"Well, I am extremely glad you have found us here, sir," said the poor contented stockbroker. "How very odd, Kate, you should not have recollected the name at once. I — never ——"

"What did you affect to forget *my* name, Kate?" said Somerford, who endeavoured, by a sort of playfulness, to hide the real interest which he felt, and the excessive disquiet which, notwithstanding his civility, Apperton's manner, and especially his manner towards Kate, had inspired.

"And is Ned grown a fine fellow?" said Somerford.

"Ay, indeed he is," said Apperton, who would speak — talking for his wife, who could not; "he has been employing himself, during the last few weeks, in hunting a beautiful shadow in the shape of a distressed damsel, who occaionally crosses his way."

"But a'n't Jane and he ——"

"Oh! she is married," said Kate; "married to a Major Overall — and — gone abroad."

"Kate, what *is* the matter?" whispered Charles; "you are surely very ill."

"Pray, pray, don't mind me; for mercy's sake, don't," replied she — in another whisper.

"Do you like brill, Captain Somerford?" said Apperton.

"What, sir!" said Charles, whose whole attention was devoted to Kate while he saw, for some reasons yet unexplained, that it was considered right by her, that he should not let his interest be visible.

"Brill! — I scarcely know what it is," said Somerford.

"Fish! fish!" said Apperton; "what Godfrey Moss calls a workhouse turbot; but I like it. I have ordered one for to-day, and some soles; perhaps, Captain Somerford, you'll do us the pleasure of dining with us. I expect Maxwell, and Ned, and old Mousetrap — you recollect Old Mousy?"

"Oh, perfectly!" said Somerford; "I'm sure I shall be very happy; I ——" Here Kate gave his arm a tre-

mendous squeeze — " that is, if I — I *am* engaged — but —I ——"

" Oh! well! well!" said Apperton; " don't put yourself out of the way; we shall be very glad to see you. Mrs. Apperton and I of course are delighted to receive any friend of the family."

" You are very kind," said Somerford, who concluded that he had now made the discovery, that Kate was on a visit to this Mr. Apperton and his wife, and that they were at *their* house to be joined by the rest of the Maxwell family. " If I can get off my engagement, I shall have great pleasure; and pray, how is Mousetrap?"

" Just the same as ever," said Apperton, " constantly grumbling, complaining of every body, smoking cigars, drinking gin and water, and finding fault with all the world who do not follow his example."

" And his reverend brother?" said Somerford.

" He of Fudley-cum-Pipes?" said Apperton, " alive and merry: it was he who made me a Benedict."

Another squeeze of Somerford's arm from Kate startled him. He had heard nothing in the conversation that required such an illustration, for it appeared to him that nothing upon earth could be more entirely a matter of indifference, as far as he was concerned, than the matrimonial proceedings of his newly-found friend and companion.

They had now reached home, and after another tender enquiry about her health, Somerford quitted Kate, who, more dead than alive, proceeded up-stairs to her room. Apperton and Somerford stood on the steps of the doors of their respective houses, which joined, and several observations with regard to the weather and the times, and the sea and the Downs, and the environs of Brighton, and the tediousness of long voyages, were exchanged, after which, Apperton entered his dwelling, and Somerford, full of happiness, (clouded, it must be confessed, by the mysterious conduct of his beloved,) proceeded to take another stroll; having, in departing, pledged himself to be at Mr. Apperton's punctually at seven, at which late hour, for them, the dinner was fixed, to accommodate the coming guests; and

rejoicing in an opportunity of first meeting Maxwell on his return, in a mixed party, where there would be none of that shiness or restraint which a *tête-à-tête*, after so long an absence, might naturally be expected to produce, under the peculiar circumstances of their last separation.

CHAPTER IV.

Are then the joys of this bless'd meeting dash'd
So soon, so soon will fortune snatch this from me,
And mock my vain embrace? Thus like one
Who, in a dream of mighty toil and labour,
Strives to embrace some visionary form;
Just as he seems to clasp the lovely object,
It slides away and vanishes to air;
So I, who through opposing difficulties
Have cut my tedious way to thy lov'd arms,
At length am disappointed, and but see thee
To take my last farewell. Oh! slipp'ry state
Of human pleasures, fleet and volatile,
Given us and snatched again in one short moment,
To mortify our hopes and edge our sufferings. TRAPP.

IT is clear that things could not long remain as they were at the moment when Charles and Katherine parted to meet again at dinner. It was past two o'clock; the Maxwells had already reached Hatt's house at Merstham (so the landlord of the Jolliffe Arms is actually named); the unhappy bride had thrown herself upon her bed in an agony of grief; Apperton had seated himself in the drawing-room, and was reading the Brighton Gazette; and Somerford, somewhat mystified, had gone to join his yellow friend, Macleod, on the Marine Parade.

Somerford, it must be confessed, was a good deal puzzled at the restraint under which it was evident Kate laboured—her tears, her agitation, the mention of her wretchedness, confounded him; and when he found himself alone, he thought still more of her manner and the matter of her conversation. It was evident to him, that she was the visiter of Mr. Apperton and his wife, to whom the gentleman had several times referred during their walk; but

he could not imagine, unless the lady was extraordinarily fascinating, what inducement Kate could have for an association with a person so vulgar, so coarse, and so abrupt in his manner, as our friend the stockbroker; little dreaming that he had already beheld the Mrs. Apperton of whom his new friend had spoken; and still less imagining that *he*, the coarse, vulgar, and abrupt, was actually the husband of his own dear, delicate, amiable, and accomplished Kate.

But if his mind was thus filled with chaotic visions, what must have been the state of poor Mrs. Apperton, who, throughout the whole of her interview and conversation with Somerford, had not the courage to confess her own infidelity to him—an infidelity, which, however glaringly apparent, and however destructive to his happiness, was in fact the work of her father. A thousand times had she wondered why Charles had totally relinquished writing; and in the earlier years of his sojourn in India, she mentioned her surprise that he should have entirely neglected them: but to none of these wonderings, or even questions, did she get any thing like a satisfactory explanation or reply from her parent. After her mother's death, as far as Kate knew, all communication ceased between her father and Somerford; and if any thing could have been inferred from the manner in which he spoke of him, before he left off speaking of him at all, it was that he had turned out ill, and that if he had not positively disgraced himself abroad, at least no good was ever to be expected from him.

It was under impressions so received, that she had taught herself obedience to her father's wishes, with respect to Apperton. She had forced herself to believe ill of Charles, because she had heard nothing from him; and the tone given to her thoughts by the insinuations of Maxwell, unfortunately according with her own sense of personal neglect and offended pride, she tacitly agreed to the compact by which she was enjoined never to mention Charles's name; and although the recollection of him was indelibly stamped upon her heart, she suffered her principle of duty to gain the mastery of love, and conceded to filial obedience the dearest hope of her existence.

Imagine, then, what *her* feelings must have been, when,

in less than three days after the final destruction of all these hopes, she beheld the long lost, long loved Somerford, returned to his native country, promoted, enriched, and placed by circumstances in a situation where he might reasonably, prudently, and fairly demand the hand of Maxwell's daughter; for Kate did not know, even then, that there was an obstacle beyond his former want of fortune, which Maxwell, full of pride and prejudice, never could have surmounted, and which stood in the way of his marriage with Kate. This, I say, she did not know, and therefore were her grief and remorse, her sorrow and repentance, far beyond the power of endurance. When the real truth came to her Charles's knowledge — when he, ardent and affectionate as he was, constant as the dial to the sun, who had hastened across the great world of waters to claim the hand of her whose heart he thought his own, the very first moment that he was enabled by circumstances to do so — when he should discover that *she* had played him false, and married another, what would his feelings be — how would he despise, contemn her! — they never could meet again. How could she confess to him the cruel duplicity of her father? — how could she endure the sight of that father, now she fully comprehended his conduct? What was to be done? — the hours were flying — the time would come — Charles would be amongst them, still hoping, still loving, still perhaps undeceived. Could she write to him — could she explain, in a short letter, what she dared not trust herself to utter? — should she leave it until her brother arrived, and make him the channel of communication?

All these conflicting doubts and fears, added to the repentance that she had not at once declared the whole of the circumstances to her husband, the moment she knew who their neighbour was, racked her brain, and so agitated her whole frame, that a series of hysteric and fainting fits was the consequence; and Apperton, who had been summoned to her room, recommended some hartshorn and water and a little scent, assuring himself and her that she would be much better in an hour or two; and, as he did not expect her father till late, seeing that he could only

have received their summons at breakfast time, she might indulge herself in sleep, which would restore her, and make her as well as ever.

Whatever sort of speculator our friend Apperton might have been in 'Change Alley, or however skilful in bleeding bulls and physicking bears, it was very evident that ministering to a mind diseased was out of his line; nor, being himself one of those iron men who never know what illness means, did he relish the care of an invalid, or the necessary stillness of a sick-room; confiding, therefore, his wife to the guardianship of her maid, Alsop, who, having lived with her four or five years, he presumed, must know her constitution perfectly, he proceeded to walk off his anxiety and gain an appetite for his brill and roasted mutton, for which dainties he had stipulated as part of his dinner.

When he was gone, or rather as soon as his wretched bride was conscious of his absence, she found herself attended by Alsop, who was bathing her temples and chafing her hands. The poor creature was terrified at her mistress's appearance; for, during the whole period of her service under her, she had never seen such indications of deep feeling or violent passion: she used to cite her young lady as an example of placid evenness of temper, not to be paralleled; but here she beheld her almost delirious, and in agonies, the source or cause of which she felt she dared not breathe. She at length begged to be left alone — and the maid unwillingly consented to leave her; for although, of course, she was unable to account for the terrible effect produced upon her mistress, she was quite convinced that it was not wise or prudent to quit her altogether; lest, as she afterwards said, she should lay violent hands on herself. Such is the force of feeling and of passion, which overcome the mild and quiet amongst women — the laugher and the cryer of every-day society feel little though they exercise their feelings constantly; but the placid, modest, unassuming, gentle female, who, not easily excited, nor generally pleased, fixes her whole affection upon one dear object, and lives in silence on the recollection of his love, when the storm of passion comes, suffers, as Katherine Maxwell did at this moment — when her heart, torn by

duty, love, grief, remorse, and anger, that she had been deluded and deceived, for the first time in her life, beat with something dreadfully like resentment against her parent.

Something was to be done: she felt it would be impossible for her to suffer Charles to hear of her marriage, unaccompanied by her justification — she knew their meeting after he did know of it was impossible. What then? — she should never see him again, and he would leave her eternally, with the conviction on his mind, that she was a fickle, heartless, worthless jilt.

One resource alone was left — a few lines would put him in possession of the fact: it had occurred to her before, but ought she, the wife of another, write to the beloved of her heart, separated as she was for ever from him? — yes, in vindication of her conduct. But how to get her note conveyed? — a confidence must be reposed in her maid, and that too in the first week of the honeymoon. She would be the messenger, the go-between, and this she could not suffer her to be, without condescending to an explanation of all the foregone circumstances, in order to justify the measure to herself, and induce the woman to make herself a party to her mistress's contrivances. Could she do *that?* — could she debase herself to ask a favour of her menial, and bind that menial to secrecy — to open her heart to an inferior, who possessed no one quality to excite either confidence or interest? — She hesitated — trembled at the thought — resolved rather to let the worst occur than take this damning step; and having so resolved, proceeded to her writing-desk, and scrawled the hateful lines, which were to announce to Charles her own falsehood, and his unhappiness.

She felt herself, for the first time in her life, a guilty creature; the very rattling of the door alarmed her — the sound of what she thought her husband's voice terrified her — she hastily closed the desk — all was silent — again it was opened, and, almost blinded with her tears, again she began her letter. The door of the room opened suddenly, and Apperton stood before her; the letter, of which two or three lines were written, lay on the table — she dared

not snatch it to conceal it — she sat motionless, and almost senseless — she then resolved to explain the whole of the circumstances to Apperton. He, however, did not take the trouble to approach the table where the letter lay; but having asked Kate how she felt herself, informed her, upon hearing that she was a little better, that he had met a city friend during his walk, and had invited him to come and dine; for, added he, where there's victuals enough for six there's enough for seven, so one does a civil thing without much expense. "He is a nice, lively, pleasant fellow," added Apperton, "and very fond of a song; so if our neighbour brings in his flute, you and they two may make up some harmony, to please the old gentleman."

This speech gave time to Kate to collect herself, and with an air of indifference as to the writing, she replaced the beginning of her letter to Charles in the desk and closed it. Her answer to the proposition of her husband was neither clear nor intelligible, and she saw with pleasure his departure again, under a promise to return by five, if *she* would promise to keep herself quiet till that time.

Apperton went — but it was doomed that his absence should have as little effect as his presence, upon the work which Katherine had in hand. Scarcely had she resumed her paper and pen, and was endeavouring to express herself so as to wound her Somerford as little as possible, when Alsop abruptly bounced into the room, and put a letter into her hands. It came, she believed, from next door — from the gentleman who was to dine with them.

"Leave it," said Kate, — "leave it — go — leave *me*."

Alsop did as she was desired, but certainly somewhat more enlightened as to the cause of her mistress's sudden illness than she previously had been; the size of the letter proclaimed that it must be something more than a mere answer to a dinner invitation, and it came from a gentleman of whom her mistress, the night before, professed to know nothing — sudden affair, especially considering how lately her mistress had been married. All these "considerations," added to the words "devil of a blow up," which Captain Somerford's English servant had whispered in her ear as he delivered the said letter into her hand, set

Miss or Mrs. (I will not pretend to say which it was) Alsop into the mind for "finding out;" her organs of inquisitiveness, like those of all domestics, were as big as walnuts, and they swelled preternaturally whenever her master or mistress left any point under discussion to be discovered; accordingly, Mrs. Alsop divided her time between listening at the bedroom door and peeping through the key-hole while her mistress read the captain's letter, and going herself to "fetch a little hot water," or something of that sort, out of the kitchen of the captain's house, where she might encounter the captain's servant, and obtain a little more illumination as to his mysterious announcement of a domestic explosion.

It was some time before Kate could muster courage to open the fatal letter — the superscription told the dreadful truth — Charles was aware of her inconstancy, for the packet was addressed to Mrs. Apperton. This seemed, amidst all her agony of grief, to relieve her mind — he knew the worst — the blow had been inflicted, and not by her hand. Again and again she assayed to reach the dreaded appeal, until at length, with one desperate effort, she seized it, and, tearing it open, read as follows: —

"It was natural that you should have been unable to tell me yourself — and I am glad that it was not from *your* lips I heard it — that I have lived to hear it at all, is my bitterest misfortune. Oh, Kate! if it were possible for you to know my heart — to appreciate its devotion, its unqualified, undivided love for you, you would better understand my feelings at a moment, when years of toil, of danger, and of hope, are repaid by intelligence, than which, the most painful of deaths would to me have been less afflicting. I do not seek to wound your feelings or harass your gentle nature — some art, some treachery must have been practised upon you, to have effected this terrible change in your feelings and affection. I must, however, vindicate myself from an imputation of neglectfulness, even though the truth should implicate others in a charge of duplicity.

"I was commanded by your father to abstain from

writing to you; it was on the condition that I ceased to correspond with you, that he permitted me to hope for eventual happiness: one of his letters is now before me, and there he says, 'Let her affections take their natural course, and if she remain firm to the feelings which you tell me you believe she entertains towards you, when you return, I may *then* be inclined to listen to your proposals although I neither bind myself to do so, nor even give you hopes of ultimate success with her. The affections of the boy may wear off with time; and since you are as likely to change your views of happiness as she may be, I think it most conducive to the comfort of both of you, to dissipate at once the idea of any thing like an engagement.'

"Surely, Kate, you must have been aware of this letter — you must have been told the nature of the test by which our affections were to be tried. Oh! when I reflect upon the days that are gone, when fainting under the heat of climate, and the fatigues of service, I have called to mind that voice and those features which I so longed to hear and to gaze upon, and have felt cheered and inspired, in the fulfilment of my most arduous duties, by the hope — the one bright hope of my life — to deserve the consent of your father to our union. When I recollect the delight I experienced when chance, or, as I considered, Providence, had given me a considerable prize in the Calcutta lottery, in addition to the prize-money I received for the successful attack and capture of a fort, in which treasure to a large amount was concealed; the joy — the agony of pleasure I felt when I reckoned myself master of that, which would purchase my promotion and make me worthy of you, — my sorrow and my disappointment are now more grievous.

"Far be it from me to complain of the inscrutable decrees of that Being to whom my prayers for the happiness of my Kate have been daily offered up ever since I left her; but how much less of sorrow should I have endured, if I had never risen from the bed of sickness on which for weeks and months I lay extended! Then I clung to life with earnestness, and prayed to be restored — for what? to see the object of all my hopes and wishes married to another. But, as if to make this blow more dreadful, look

at the points of time connected with the event; if, instead of staying at the Cape for three months, I had proceeded home at all hazards, I might have yet saved myself from misery — nay, if we had not been delayed a week at St. Helena beyond the period we expected, I should still have been in England before your marriage. There is a fate in this, and I, wretch that I am, must submit.

"When this reaches you I shall be on my road to London; I have left orders for my servant to follow me in the evening. For me to remain near you, to see you again, would have been impossible; to meet your father after what has passed, at all events so soon after the heavy blow has fallen, would be both painful and useless. It is in vain for me to doubt, that he always had some fixed objection to me beyond my want of fortune — an objection incompatible, as it always appeared, with his long and ancient friendship with my father. My mother, once or twice, when wounded and offended by his conduct after my father's death, seemed inclined to explain to me the nature of that objection, for she was aware of it; but whatever it may be, her feelings always overcame her when she made the effort to inform me. What it was, her death, during my absence, renders it now impossible I should ever know.

"In the hurried whirl of passion and feeling under which I labour, I can form no settled plan of proceeding. I have now no tie to England. I have no relation that I know of, — and now you are all lost to me — no friends — oh! what a blank, what a desert is my country! I stand alone in the multitude — spurned by the friend of my father, and rejected by her who was dearer to me than my life.

"I had collected for you, Kate, — all, all for you, — some jewels of no great value; but rare, I believe, in this country — on which I have gazed a thousand times, and fancied them worn by you — which you alone must possess; but I suppose the customs of society render your acceptance of them now improper; — be it so — short will be the period before the gift may be received without apprehension. What I have endured within the three last hours will effect that, which the climate of India, and the severe fatigue I have undergone, have failed to accomplish. When I am

dead, Kate, there can be no impropriety in your receiving my poor present as a legacy. Look at those jewels sometimes, and think of the once happy companion of your youth — of him, who lived but for you, and whose hopes, whose happiness, whose existence, were sacrificed to the cruelty of those who made you false.

"It will be impossible, as, indeed, it would be unworthy, to conceal any of the facts connected either with my attachment to you, or our meeting here to-day, from your father or friends. They and you may rely upon it, that I shall never further intrude myself. My feelings towards you are such, that I could not meet and associate with you on terms of mere friendship: the depth of my affection, and the bitterness of my disappointment, prevent it. The course for me to pursue is clear and plain. Religion and morality point the way, and I shall follow it — the struggle is now to be made. I could not trust myself to see you — that would have been too much to bear. In this way only could I summon courage to abandon all my earthly expectations and comfort. My heart aches to its very centre, my head burns with fever, my eyes stream with tears, while I sign the doom of my own wretchedness. It is a duty I owe to you, and to those who now alone must be dear to you. Farewell, Kate — farewell for ever! The blessing of Heaven be upon you! — pity and pardon me if I have ever offended you, and accept the forgiveness of one, who, ignorant as he is of the circumstances which have operated on your mind, and led to what has occurred, cannot but attribute to others the conduct which has sealed his wretchedness. Farewell! C. S."

This letter it would have been the height of indelicacy, not to speak of a breach of confidence in me, to have laid before the reader, if it had been seen by nobody but the writer, and her to whom it was addressed; but Kate having, when she had read it, fallen into a fit, from which she recovered only to relapse, and then sink in a state of insensibility on the bed, Mrs. Alsop took the liberty, before she applied any remedy or restorative to her mistress, to read every word of it too; after which it underwent a similar

perusal by Mr. Apperton himself, who, when he returned, found his unhappy wife fallen into a slumber, produced by the violence of her agitation, and some mixture which her maid had administered to her, in which it was clear the soothing influence of opium had not been wanting.

The sentiments and feelings which the epistle excited in the bosoms of the two persons who had perused it, were, as it might be supposed, tolerably powerful, although entirely different in their nature. To the maid, it was an enlightenment for which she had been in some degree prepared, by the hints of Captain Somerford's servant, and the perturbation of her mistress, whom she forthwith denounced, in Godfrey Moss's pronunciation, "a sly cretur," for not having made her a confidante, although her maid now of five or six years' standing; but to Apperton it opened an entirely new scene — it exhibited a vista of matrimonial *happiness* which he by no means had anticipated, while the allusion to the elder Maxwell's duplicity, coupled with his cordial anxiety to conclude the match between him and Kate, gave a new character to his warmth and cordiality, and established the stockbroker, in his own mind, as a sort of stop-gap, who, so far from having excited a flame in the bosom of the young lady, had been rather used as an extinguisher to put one out, which had been burning there for some time previous.

Unconscious as he was that Mrs. Alsop had had the benefit of enlightening herself from the same source, Apperton began to calculate how he should act upon the knowledge he had so very uncomfortably acquired. If he admitted that he had become acquainted with what was evidently a family secret, and which had most assiduously been kept from his knowledge, he knew enough of the world, and its ways, to know that he ought to feel (and express his feeling too) extremely angry at the line of conduct which old Maxwell had adopted towards him; because, although it may form no part of a parent's duty to furnish his daughter's lover with a list of the former candidates for her favour, still, the extreme caution which hindered even the slightest reference to his name and connection, with the *ruse* by which the correspondence between the young people

had been cut short, preyed upon his mind; and, laying down the letter exactly where he found it, he retired from the apartment hastily, and told Mrs. Alsop (whom he had already wrongfully metamorphosed into a cunning *intriguante*, and a faithful confidante of his wife,) that her mistress was asleep, and that he would return in half an hour, thinking it better not to disturb her.

As he descended the steps of the house door, purposing to walk off his mortification, and ruminate upon his difficulties in the fresh air, he beheld Captain Somerford's servant, piling on a wheelbarrow divers and sundry packages, in the very act of emigrating from Brighton: an exhibition which gladdened his eyes, and cheered his heart; for not only did it give appearance of his rival's departure, but authenticated, as far as it went, his promises and intentions contained in the letter to Kate.

The servant having put nearly the finishing stroke to his packing, touched his hat to Apperton, and delivered him a note, which was intended to have been the whole portion of the correspondence which was to be subjected to his inspection: he took it, and opened it, and found the following lines: —

"Captain Somerford presents his compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Apperton, regrets that business of an urgent nature, which calls him to London immediately, will prevent his having the honour of dining with them to-day."

"I am very sorry," said Apperton, mechanically, in the hearing of the servant; "and the captain is gone?"

"He went off, sir, at half-past three," said the servant; "I follow him by the night coach, sir."

"To London?" said Apperton—thinking it a good plan to get as much information as possible, in order to compare his acts with his intentions, and so form a standard by which he might regulate his reliance upon all the promises contained in his farewell epistle.

"Yes, sir, to London," replied the man; "to Ibbotson's hotel, in Vere Street, Cavendish Square."

Apperton was puzzled whether to "part friends," as the boys say, and send his compliments to the captain, and express his regret at not seeing him, which he most as-

suredly did not feel; human nature prevailed, and he walked off, grumbling to himself.

And now, who amongst us is there, who would not have grumbled, under similar circumstances? To a strongly sensitive mind, such a discovery as Apperton had made would have produced a storm of contending passion and feeling, which it would have required not a little to calm or allay. Apperton, in less than ten minutes, balanced the uncomfortable part of his case in the opposite scale, to the advantages derivable from his securing the person and fortune of his wife, and the control and influence which the connection gave him over her father's property. As *he* stood in the world, and with his views and passions, there was scarcely any indignity which he would not have suffered, out of the money market, to carry his points in it; and after summing up in his mind a thousand different speculations, and a thousand different schemes, he determined to put his pride and indignation into his pocket, affect to believe in the excuse of Captain Somerford, never acknowledge to having seen the letter he had written to Kate, and to attribute his wife's indisposition to the sun, the sea, the air, or the water, or, indeed, to any thing except that which it truly arose from.

It was clear, by this mode of proceeding, that he should not only escape a serious discussion with Maxwell, which might terminate in an open rupture, and general separation of the parties, but he would also escape the imputation of having read his wife's letter; and he satisfied himself, now that her swain was gone, all would go on well again; and having formed his opinion of women upon certain specimens of the sex with which he had become familiar in his earlier days, he felt assured that Kate would say nothing about what had passed, but, depositing the epistle of her once-loved Somerford in her writing-desk, meet her family at dinner, as calm, as cool, and as collected as if nothing had happened. Whether he had formed a just estimate of his wife's feelings and sincerity, we may, perhaps, hereafter discover. His notion was, to use his own expression, that she would "take it coolly," as a sister-in-law of his own once did, when her lover was locked up in a china closet

for seven hours, during which her husband dined, drank his wine with his wife, discussed his tea and toast, sipped his brandy and water, smoked his pipe, and retired to rest; — and right anxious he was that the whole affair might blow over in a similar manner.

In the mean time Kate was slowly recovering from the effect of her agitation, and the dose, whatever it was, with which her careful attendant had plied her; but the sight of the fatal letter, the moment it caught her eye, as she was arousing herself from the death-like languor which had fallen over her, threw her again into strong hysterics.

It would have been vain for Alsop to deny that she had made herself mistress of its contents, during the swoon, or rather syncope, of her lady: the interest she exhibited, the soothing tenderness of manner, so marked in her conduct to Kate, proved that she was aware of the cause and origin of her distress and disorder.

"Where, where is my husband?" were the first words poor Katherine uttered.

"He has been here, ma'am," said Alsop, "and told me he should return presently; for he thought it best not to disturb you."

"Disturb!—God help me!" said Kate; "when shall I rest? Oh! my heart, my heart! Did Mr. Apperton see this letter?" asked she.

"I really don't know," said Alsop, delighted at the approach to something like confidence in her. "I'm sure, if he did, ma'am, he must be much too much of a gentleman to have read it."

"I don't know," said Katherine, faintly smiling; "under the circumstances, I should think him justified in doing so. And is this all reality? Have I not been dreaming some horrible dreams?"

"No, ma'am, no," said Alsop: "it's all true and real; and I am sure, if you had seen the captain when he went out to go away, you would have thought him mad, stark, staring mad."

"Is he gone?" said Katherine, gasping for breath.

"Went at half-past three, to the minute, ma'am," said Alsop; "and his man is off after him, with all the luggage and parcels that came here yesterday."

"That is some relief," said Mrs. Apperton: "give me the letter, Alsop."

Alsop did as she was desired, and Kate received it with an effort at tranquillity; but it was vain: unconsciously and involuntarily she pressed the senseless folds of the envelope, as if her very existence was identified with the words which it contained.

Had she but delayed her decision in favour of Apperton a few short weeks, she might have married *him* to whom her faith was plighted, and have made him happy, who in her sweet society, and under her gentle influence, would have ensured her comfort and his own honour and respectability; but uneasy and unhappy in the constant recollection of one whose name she dared not mention, and whose long silence she had been taught to construe into indifference, she relinquished the bright visions which had adorned her earlier days, and caught at a prospect of tranquil existence, which, when once the heart's first love is blighted, is all that woman may expect to enjoy.

But when she thought of what Charles himself was suffering—Charles, upon whom the disappointment of his hopes had fallen as a thunderbolt; who, unlike her, surrounded by relations and friends, stood isolated in the world. The thoughts of home associated with her; the cheering smile of her father welcoming him in his advanced rank and improved circumstances; the kind friendship of the ingenuous Edward—all, all were lost, buried in one chaotic mass: and Somerford was thrown into the metropolis, scarcely convalescent from what had been reported a mortal illness, without one human being to minister to his wants and wishes, or cheer him in the hour of sickness and of sorrow.

"He is really gone, then," said Kate; gazing on the open space, while tears chased each other down her pale cheeks. "Gone—whither! I am better now—I can cry—my heart is easier. Oh why—why did I not see him for one minute, for one moment, to have told him I was not the heartless being—the—but perhaps it is better as it is."

"Kate, may I come in?" said Apperton, knocking at

the door, which Alsop (who had lived in a good family before she came to the Maxwells) had previously locked.

"No, no! not for the world!" said Kate, in a hurried whisper to Alsop, "presently—say presently—oh! not now!"

Alsop assured her master that her lady was not sufficiently well to see or speak to him just yet; but that she would come down to him in the drawing-room when she was a little more recovered.

"I trust that Heaven will forgive my father for his cruelty to me," murmured Kate; "I thought that he had confidence in me; but no, his commands were not enough; he could not trust me for obedience, and so—so—Charles—poor Charles!—Oh! mercy! mercy on me!"

Here terminated the scene for the present. Kate again fell into hysterics, and again was subjected by her maid to the discipline of all the established remedies for such complaints: but Alsop was soon convinced, that any efforts of her mistress to rally, so as to present herself at table when her father should arrive, would be perfectly vain; and, therefore, having tranquillised her for the moment, she descended to the drawing-room, according to her promise, to inform Apperton that rest was absolutely essential for her mistress, and that although she saw no immediate necessity for calling in medical assistance, she thought that she ought not to be moved or disturbed until the arrival of her father, under whose opinion and advice they ought to act as occasion should require.

The truth is, that, independently of her bodily ills, Katherine was at certain periods delirious; and Mrs. Alsop knew, by experience, that nothing in the world is so dangerous to domestic tranquillity as temporary lightheadedness in the lady of a family: secrets that have been buried in the deepest holes and corners for years are blurted out in the most unceremonious manner; and as the wary maid knew enough of her mistress's feelings to be quite sure that any violent exhibition of candour would be far from complimentary or agreeable to her husband, she wished to keep him apart from his wife, until the feverish restlessness under which she was labouring should have

subsided, and the chance of his hearing any unpleasant truths relative either to himself, or any body else, should have proportionably diminished.

"What," said Apperton,—"what do you think is the cause of this indisposition, Alsop?"

"Upon my word," said Alsop, "I have no kind of idea, sir. Sometimes the marine affluvia affects ladies on this coast, the air is so uncommon bracing. I have known ladies who have been unable to remain here any length of time; it may be that—you know, sir——"

"Nothing has happened to alarm or agitate her?" said Apperton.

"Not the smallest thing in life, at least as I know of," said Alsop.

"She has not told you of any thing, I mean?" said he.

"Not a syllable, sir," replied the waiting woman: "I think it might have been the prawns my mistress eat at breakfast, because I know they don't *dis*gest easy; but there's no telling, sir—the human frame is so delicate, that—but I'd better not stay away too long, sir—I'll come down again presently, and let you know, sir—I think I hear my mistress calling."

Saying which, Mrs. Alsop returned to the bed-room, the result of the conversation with her master being, his entire belief that she was ignorant of the real cause of his wife's illness, and his perfect conviction that nobody had read the letter except Kate and himself; all of which belief and conviction went to strengthen him in the determination of stating to Maxwell the plain fact of her indisposition, in the first instance, and afterwards incidentally mentioning the recognition and invitation of Captain Somerford, leaving both to work as they might, he remaining ignorant of the cause, and, consequently, unsuspicious of the effects produced upon his wife.

As the evening approached, Katherine did not rally, and it was almost seven o'clock when her maid pronounced the utter impossibility of her coming down to receive her father, or even of her getting up. She prescribed a huge basin of tea, and quiet; and considering she was trying

the difficult experiment of ministering to the mind, perhaps that regimen was as good as any other. At all events, for the first week of a honeymoon, things did not look over lively; and Apperton had worked himself up into a little fever of his own, when a sudden change was given to the current of his thoughts by the arrival of the travelling carriage, and a thundering knock at the fragile door of the house. He was on the alert in an instant to receive his visiters; and in a few minutes Maxwell was in the drawing-room, Ned on the top of the stairs, and Godfrey Moss, taking his time, clambering, as he called it, crying out in a shrill, feigned voice, —

"Kittums! Kittums!" as if poor Kate could smile, or run to receive him as she would have done a little week before.

The secret of her illness could not be kept from Maxwell, who, being a bit of a fatalist, had two or three times told his companions that he anticipated something disagreeable on his arrival at Brighton. This, to some people, might pass for prescience, and, being a Scotchman, might in Maxwell do duty for second sight; but it should be recollected, that, before he left London on the expedition, he was aware that the bane of his hopes, the orphan child of his friend, the discarded lover of his daughter, was not only in England, but actually at Brighton.

Maxwell was visibly and deeply affected when he heard of his child's illness: he despatched Alsop to prepare her for his visit; and Apperton's agitation, caused by a thousand contending feelings (if his sensations may be dignified with such a name), added not a little to his anxiety and solicitude. Ned, who loved his sister fondly, and who had a thousand things to tell her about his romantic affair with Maria, was suddenly overcast with gloom, and Moss, who anticipated that the "mutton" would be punctual to a moment at seven, sat himself down in a dark corner and grunted; and when the servant brought in candles, took an opportunity of enquiring whether the dinner was nearly ready, bidding him tell the cook to send it up whenever it was done, as those who wanted to eat might as well have it hot; and as for those who did not, it did not

signify whether it got cold upon the table, or in the kitchen.

In less than half an hour after their arrival, Alsop announced her mistress's readiness to receive her father; and Maxwell, availing himself of the permission, proceeded to the apartment, where she lay extended on her bed.

CHAPTER V.

Take heed of pride, and curiously consider
How brittle the foundation is, on which
You labour to advance it. Niobe,
Proud of her numerous issue, durst contemn
Latona's double burthen; but what followed?

MASSINGER.

"THIS is, indeed, a sad business," said Maxwell, as he re-entered the dinner parlour, where the customary meal had been in progress, under the command of Moss, and with the cordial acquiescence of Apperton, who kept aloof from the sick chamber, in order to give Katherine an opportunity, if she chose, of explaining to her father the particulars of what had occurred: "poor Kate is seriously ill."

"Ah!" said Moss, helping himself to a bumper of Port wine, his sole and sovereign remedy at dinner-time for all evils. But he said it in a tone which implied, although he knew nothing of what had actually happened, that her indisposition was "all along of her marriage with a man she did not care about."

"Is she feverish, sir?" said Apperton.

"Very," replied Maxwell: "she must be kept perfectly quiet—the agitation of her mind just at this juncture would be productive of very serious results."

"Has she seen any old acquaintance here," said Moss, "who has stirred up her feelings?"

"Moss, Moss!" said Maxwell, in a tone calculated, as he hoped, to check any further conversation of that character.

Apperton felt the blood rise into his cheeks; a sensation produced not only from the consciousness of his being

privy to the whole of the affair, but from a sense of mortification that the facts connected with her early attachment were so generally known.

"Nothing to be sure could be more inopportune, or uncomfortable," said Maxwell: "however, there are little worries in life which must be endured, and, let us hope, overcome; she 'll be better in a day or two:—Apperton, a glass of wine."

"With all my heart, sir," said Apperton: "I 'll drink to Kate's speedy recovery."

"With all *my* heart," said Maxwell.

And in this sort of broken, desultory manner, the colloquy was maintained while the servants were necessarily present: but it was clear that Maxwell was fraught with matter of more importance, and that he was only waiting for an opportunity to unburthen his mind to his son-in-law; who, on the other hand, fondly hoped that his father-in-law would suffer him to remain in ignorance of the facts of the case, none of which he pretended to know. Apperton sat half trembling at every turn in the conversation, convinced, in his own small mind, that his wife would never be so silly as to confess to her father that her indisposition was the result of an interview with a person whose correspondence he had interdicted, and a connection with whom he had so decidedly declined.

But Apperton knew little of the innate purity of the being to whom he was united. The savage possessor of gold could not be more ignorant of the intrinsic value of his property, than was the stockbroker of the worth of his exemplary and ill-fated wife. Her first impulse was to relieve her heart of a weight of woe and self-reproach by detailing minutely to her father all that had occurred. At first, he felt angry with Somerford; then, as the circumstances of their accidental meeting developed themselves, he softened into something like pity for his disappointment, and approbation of her honourable conduct:—he blamed not his daughter's first concealment of her acquaintance with his name when she saw it, or rather heard Apperton repeat it; when he read his letter, which Katherine gave him, he seemed agitated with conflicting feelings

and passions; the exposure of his own duplicity naturally irritated him, although, in Kate's state of health and spirits, he did not suffer his anger to appear; but in conclusion, when, in the fulness and bitterness of her remorse for having, as she said, heedlessly accepted Apperton, she wept at her own infidelity, Maxwell bade her console herself, for, said he, "had you remained for ever single, and Somerford had returned laden with all the wealth of the empire from which he comes, he never should have been your husband with *my* consent. If," added he, "this truth can relieve you from any regrets on that point, believe your father. There is an objection in my mind, so strong against an alliance with him, that although the son of a man with whom I once was upon terms of the closest intimacy, and for whom, I may add, I felt, at one period of my life, almost a brotherly affection, I never could have received him as a son-in-law."

The consolation, as Maxwell thought it, which Kate was to derive from this violent opposition of her father to Charles, was considerably qualified by the stigma which it seemed to affix upon the character or qualities of one who never could cease to be dear to her; and when her father had made this declaration, she entreated him to speak no more on the subject. The die was cast—her fate was fixed; and by the strengthening aid of religion, and the exercise of those principles in which she had been brought up, she would truly and faithfully fulfil the vows she had plighted at the altar. "But, oh!" added she, "do not, do not seek to alleviate my regrets by deteriorating from the character of my poor lost Charles. Ease, comfort, happiness, obtained by lowering *him* in my estimation, by destroying the bright vision I have formed of his excellence and his future eminence, would be to me but little worth. No, my father; Charles Somerford is all honour, all goodness, and all truth! That he is nothing to me, takes not from that goodness, nor can it blind me to his virtues; but I am not so entirely selfish—not so thoroughly worldly—but I can look on what I have lost with the same eye of admiration and affection, separated from the tender feelings with which they were once blended, and apart from

those sentiments which I myself solemnly renounced, when I pledged my faith as a wife to another."

"Kate," said her father, "you are a kind, excellent girl. At this moment to argue, to speak on the subject of Somerford, would be idle and cruel. Your fever and general disorder are the natural results of high excitement and powerful agitation, and to endeavour to stem the current of your feelings would be madness. As far as all that duty demands, I need never speak to my child. For the past, time alone can do the work. Believe me, Kate, that what I say with respect to Somerford, I say merely in the hope of reconciling you to what has occurred, and with no view of lowering him in your estimation. Of this you will perhaps be convinced, when I tell you that, insuperable as was my objection to him as a son-in-law, it arises from events over which he could have had no control, and which implicate neither his personal honour nor his individual character."

It was after the conversation of which I have given this brief abstract, that Maxwell went down to the dinner parlour; whence, after having hastily partaken of the fare, he again returned to Kate's room. Shortly after, at her desire, he sent a message to Edward, desiring his attendance, his sister having expressed a wish to see him. Moss, however, was not included in the invitation, because Maxwell was certain he would begin upon the only subject which it was their chief anxiety to avoid; and as Moss, who never liked Apperton much, now liked him less, he resolved not to subject himself to a *tête-à-tête* with *him*, and accordingly, finding that he was excluded from the cabinet, he wrapped himself up in his well-furred cloak, and, spite of the darkness and cold, neither of which well "suited his complaint," he betook himself to the house of an ancient friend of his, who greatly sympathised with him in an affection for cigars and hot gin and water, and where he knew he could indulge in his passion with impunity: Moss, moreover, not at all liking the "house of mourning," and preferring, as speedily as his legs would permit him, to exchange the "doleful dumps" at Maxwell's, (where he found himself not "called in," and rather

thought himself "left out,") for the society of his convivial crony in the vicinity of the Steyne.

Off he went, getting what he called "a sniff of the briney" on his way along the Cliff, and leaving word that he should be in by ten; thereby implying that he should be only temporarily absent, and, by naming the hour, marking his confidence and belief that supper, so generally adopted at Maxwell's in London, would not be relinquished in his residence on the coast.

There are a vast number of ways of making the agreeable in society, and several of these pleasant knacks did Godfrey Moss himself possess: but the mode he this afternoon adopted happened to be unconsciously, as far as he was himself concerned, the most acceptable that he could possibly have hit upon; and it was one which many other vastly charming people might perhaps occasionally try with equal success. I mean that of walking himself off. Maxwell felt conscious that, after what had occurred in the course of the day, Apperton would expect (as indeed he ought to have) some explanation of the circumstances under which Katherine and Somerford had been so strongly affected by the sight of each other, as well as of the precise nature of the acquaintance and connection which had formerly subsisted between them.

Maxwell, although conscious of the propriety and necessity of making this explanation, was equally conscious that it would be impossible to put his design into execution in the presence of Moss, who would be sure to keep up a sort of running commentary, by glass, voice, and snuff-box, upon all that his friend, the surgeon, might advance in elucidation of the unpleasant events of the forenoon; therefore, when he retired to the dinner-room, full of his object, and anxious to set things to rights, but with all the dread of Godfrey's burlesque and sarcasm before his eyes, his satisfaction may easily be imagined, when he found the coast clear, and Apperton alone, sitting gazing at the fire, and seeing in the glowing embers the brilliant chambers of the teeming mines, of which he was so extensive a shareholder, and longing for the return of his father-in-law from his wife's room, in order to hear, not as a very tender hus-

band in the first week of the honeymoon ought to have wished, how his beloved Kate was going on; but what truth there was in the account of the failure of a second banking-house in the city, of which the rumour had the day before reached Brighton, and what, if possible, was the price of the North Shields Sawdust Consolidation Company's shares at the last quotation.

The reverie of the stockbroker terminated, and Maxwell joined him.

"Kate," said Maxwell, "I am glad to say, is better: she must remain quiet, and I hope a few days will set her to rights again—Moss is gone, I see."

"He is gone on a visit to a friend," said Apperton: "he found me dull, I suppose; I am not in a very conversible humour upon general topics, I confess."

"That is not very surprising, Apperton," said Maxwell; "I can perfectly understand, and entirely appreciate, your feelings."

"Pray," said Apperton, "did you hear before you left town whether it is true that Simpson, Hopkins, and Brown, have stopped?"

"I did not hear," said Maxwell.

"Did my clerk send you the list of share-prices up to twelve to-day, as I wrote word?" said Apperton.

"No," said Maxwell, "I only saw yesterday's list."

"Dear heart, how provoking!" said Apperton. "I wanted so much to know, because I could have written to-night, to direct him what to do at the office—I think I shall be obliged to go up to town in the morning."

Maxwell, whose sense of honour was extremely strong, and whose perception was amazingly acute, saw, in this little conversation with Apperton, not only a desire on his part to evade any thing like explanation with him on the subject of Somerford, but a determination to call his rival immediately to account for his conduct, and perhaps subsequently to make the acknowledged affection which Kate and Charles had so distinctly avowed the groundwork of a separation from his newly-acquired wife.

That Maxwell was never more mistaken in his life, the reader, who has seen Apperton through a much clearer

medium than bundles of bonds, shares, and scrip, will easily believe; of attachments, except legal ones, Apperton knew little; and as for calling out, it was a term to which he never would have applied any meaning, except as relating to the noisy proclamation of names by the porters of the Stock Exchange, as the jobbers and brokers who belong to the house happen to be wanted by their uninitiated customers outside.

Maxwell, who had established his son-in-law in his mind as a paragon of excellence, thought he had fathomed his intentions, and anticipated the character of his expedition to London.

"Apperton," said Maxwell, "I am not to be told that what you have just said is meant as an honourable disguise to your real feelings and views at this crisis: you have no anxiety about the stopping of banking-houses, nor any care as to buying and selling of shares."

"What have I done, sir," said Apperton, "to justify such an opinion of me? Have I ever neglected your business, or that of any other client?" (In these times shoemakers, and coachmakers, and tailors, and all the rest of the handicraftsmen of the metropolis, call their customers clients; excepting always the wealthy bankers, who call their customers — customers, and their shops — shops.) "I do assure you, that if 'Simpson, Hopkins, and Brown,' have stopped, it will be a very serious thing for a great many of us, and it must be looked to; and as for selling the shares, Mr. Maxwell, of course I should not sell any of yours without advice; but I see no use in holding, if they happen to tumble."

"Assure yourself, Apperton," said Maxwell, "that I never meant to undervalue your qualities as a man of business. My confidence in you has been practically evinced — all I possess in the world I have placed at your disposal and under your management; that of itself is a sufficient proof of *my* opinion; but I know the world and human nature, and I know that it is impossible for you to reflect upon the occurrences of this day, before our arrival here, without feelings of a most acute nature, and which it will require a clear and candid explanation on my part to heal and moderate."

"How, sir!" said Apperton, still adhering to his plan of ignorance, a system which, upon most points, he would have found incomparably successful; "I know of nothing particular that has happened, except, indeed, this sudden indisposition of Kate's, which, as you say she will soon be better, I conclude is not very serious or important."

"Not the illness itself," said Maxwell; "that might not, as it need not, alarm or agitate you, but the cause of it cannot fail, I think, to excite some unpleasant sensations."

"Cause!" said Apperton; "I'm sure, sir, I am not to blame. I — if the sea air, or the bracing nature of the atmosphere, or the——"

"Come, come," said Maxwell, "we had better meet the question fairly and honourably. The arrival of Captain Somerford so inopportunely at this place is indeed a circumstance very much to be regretted."

"I think his sudden departure more so," said Apperton, "for he had promised to dine here to-day, which, as an old friend of yours and hers, as Kate told me he was, I invited him to do; but he wrote me word that he was hurried to London upon particular business, and so could not come to us."

"You surely did not expect that he would come," said Maxwell, "when he became aware of the nature of your connection with my daughter?"

"Oh! I don't know any thing about that," said Apperton.

"Not know!" said Maxwell; "why, Apperton, you do not mean to plead ignorance of the fact that my daughter's affections as a girl — a child almost — were fixed upon Somerford, and that I objected to him on certain points; and that although the son of a particular friend, I procured him a commission in a regiment on foreign service, in order to break off the intercourse with my family?"

"Indeed," said Apperton, "I — I didn't know — that is, I——"

"Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell, who was all candour himself, and could not endure shuffling in others, "you carry this too far. If you have an intention of proceeding to extremities with this young gentleman, which I must

say, whatever your feelings may be, would be highly unjustifiable and unwarrantable, your attempt to blind me by a denial of even a suspicion of facts with which you are perfectly well acquainted, is childish and absurd. If you are determined, for no earthly reason but revenge, as it seems to me, to imbrue your hands in the blood of an honourable and high-spirited young soldier, of course I have no control over your actions; but, at the same time, I cannot but protest against such a line of proceeding, and, above all, I must deprecate the mode in which you evade the explanation I am ready to give you, by a denial of that which is already self-evident."

"I deny nothing," said Apperton; "I'm not going to imbrue my hands in any body's blood. I have no quarrel, —no cause of quarrel with Captain Somerford, who, besides being a friend of yours, seems to me to be a remarkably nice, spruce, genteel young man; and as for fighting any body because he does not choose to dine with me, I'll leave it to any two of the best men on the Stock Exchange to say whether that's necessary."

"Still," said Maxwell, "you treat jestingly what I know must weigh deeply on your mind. The letter which Captain Somerford addressed to your wife is the document to which I refer: you there saw the explanation of the writer, and his allusions to my conduct in the affair. It is *my* explanation upon these points that you shall now receive."

"Letter!" said Apperton, "did Captain Somerford write a letter to Kate? I ——"

"Stop, stop, Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell; "recollect yourself —you *know* he wrote a letter to my daughter."

"To *me* a note," said Apperton, still shirking and shifting. "I have got it in my pocket—here it is; I have jotted down the posting money from town on the back of it."

"I mean no such thing," said Maxwell; "I mean the letter in which Somerford takes his leave of Kate for ever, and which you have read."

"I!" said Apperton; "what—that—I ——"

"Good God! Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell, who began

to believe that his evasions were but for the purpose of covering his very chivalrous designs; "I mean the letter which you read—the letter which my daughter gave *me* to to read the moment I arrived, as the best and fullest explanation she could afford of what had occurred in the family."

"Oh," said Apperton, "Kate told you, did she? Oh! I *did* see a letter, but I did not know,—and I should not have mentioned it if she had not, because it is no good making a disturbance, and when a thing is done, it cannot be undone; and the offer of the jewels was very handsome, and I—yes—yes—I recollect now—I did——"

"And did you think so ill," said Maxwell, "of the daughter I have educated, and the woman you have married, as to believe that she would conceal from me or from yourself such a circumstance as the receipt of such a letter from such a quarter? you must have indeed under-rated not only the qualities of my child, but of every living woman of worth or character. In *her* case, concealment only could make her guilty."

"Why," said Apperton, rather pertly, "I did not know what she might like to do as regards *you*, because the day Captain Somerford landed, and when I saw his name on a trunk, and mentioned it to her, she did not acknowledge him as an acquaintance, or seem indeed as if she had ever even heard of him before."

"That she has told me also," said Maxwell; "but there is a vast difference between not acknowledging an acquaintance which is at an end, and which it was at that moment certainly not her intention to renew, and receiving a serious appeal from a former lover, with whom, contrary to all expectation, she was brought into immediate contact."

"I am sure," said Apperton, "I am all for quiet, and I am very happy as I am; and I think the captain has behaved very liberally, and very like a gentleman; but I cannot help saying, that it vexes me to find that Kate was induced to accept me, when, as every thing now shows, she was still hankering after him."

"Hankering!" said Maxwell, looking at Apperton, as

if he could have annihilated him. "Hankering is an inapplicable word, sir; my daughter, under my counsel, and at my desire, had banished Captain Somerford from her heart and recollection; he suddenly returns and stands before her—from her heart he is still excluded, but the sight of one who for several years, and those years when the strongest impressions are made, had been her constant companion, naturally excited her feelings, from the effects of which she is now suffering."

"Oh! I can easily fancy that," said Apperton: "as I say, he is a remarkably handsome, nice, agreeable man; and I am sure, as far as I am concerned, I see no reason, old acquaintance as he is of all of you, for his running away in the manner he did. I should not have been either the least jealous or uncomfortable, if he had staid here for a month."

Maxwell, who had never yet seen Apperton drawn out to his full extent, and had never till now applied the varnish to the whole-length portrait of the stockbroker, looked at him for a minute or two without uttering a syllable, uncertain whether his son-in-law had hitherto been acting a part, in order to obtain his daughter, or that he himself had been till this day stone blind to his imperfections. The fact is, that the surgeon had hitherto only tried him by his professional merits, his knowledge of business, and his activity in taking advantage of events likely to conduce to the profit of his principal: he had now got him on new ground; and it must be confessed, that to a mau of Maxwell's notions and principles, his *début* in his new character was any thing but gratifying. Of one thing, however, he was quite satisfied; namely, that he need entertain no alarm on the subject of his hostility towards Somerford.

"Why," said Maxwell, after expending about a minute in stirring the fire, "there is no accounting for the difference which exists in the construction and quality of minds; you speak fairly and truly of your confidence in Kate, and your reliance on the honour of Somerford; but to hearts like theirs the idea would be insupportable. In short, such an association would be utterly impossible, even if

custom and the ways of the world did not suggest its impropriety."

"Well, sir," said Apperton, "all I have to say, I have said before. I think nothing of what is past one way or another, only I am afraid that however Kate may keep her old sweetheart out of sight, she won't keep him out of mind; and I think, though I should not say so, that it would have been better to have let her had her own way at first."

"Your generosity of feeling does you honour," said Maxwell, "and I as a father, not particular for severity or coercion, agree with you; but there are certain feelings and prejudices existing in certain minds, that are insuperable; there existed an obstacle to Somerford's union with my daughter, which I never could have surmounted; his want of fortune might have been, and indeed has been, overcome by circumstances; but with my feelings, and a pride which I confess savours somewhat of illiberality, but which I inherit from a long line of ancestors, from whom I am but a very unworthy descendant, I never could have reconciled his peculiar case to my views for my daughter."

"Any thing disgraceful?" said Apperton.

"Not in himself," replied Maxwell; "nor indeed in any thing over which he could have a control; the fact is, Apperton, I am proud—and that's the truth. Now many of our most illustrious families have their sources in illegitimacy; and in the highest ranks of life, where the prohibition of the law itself intervenes to prevent a prince's marrying the object of his affections because her blood is not royal, the offspring of a cruelly qualified connection, are, to my mind, exceptions to the general rule I have laid down."

"I see, sir," said Apperton.

"Now," continued Maxwell, "Somerford is the son of a most intimate friend of mine, who married, early in life, a very amiable person, the daughter, as he believed, of very respectable parents in Suffolk; and it was not until the death of his wife's believed mother, that my friend knew he had married the offspring of some unknown parents, who had consigned her, with a marriage portion, to the

care of this family. Now, if she had been the daughter of these people, humble as they were, I should have felt no repugnance at the connection; but here is Somerford, without relation or connection, descended from some man's natural child, most unnaturally discarded. That, Apperton, is the insuperable objection which must always have interposed itself between Charles Somerford and my daughter, in the way of man and wife. I tell you this in confidence, to calm your feelings of regret on her account, although I have never mentioned to Katherine the real impediment to what, in other days, she considered the completion of her happiness."

"And, sir," said Apperton, rising, and looking exceedingly angry, "if you had spared yourself the trouble of making the communication to *me*, I should have felt your forbearance more civil than your explanation. I see, sir, that now Captain Somerford is returned, my feelings are not to be considered; and that what I am almost inclined to believe cannot have been the true reason for your refusal of him, is now lugged forward for the purpose of wounding me upon the most tender point."

"You!" said Maxwell. "How an explanation intended to dissipate any disagreeable feelings on your part —how that should be thus misinterpreted into an insult, I cannot possibly understand; and why you should doubt its sincerity, I am still more at a loss to conceive."

"Why, sir," said Apperton, his face crimsoned with anger and agitation, "I cannot believe that the illegitimacy of Captain Somerford's mother should have induced you to decline him as a son-in-law; and if it did, I cannot see the necessity of insulting *me* by mentioning it."

"Insult!" repeated Maxwell.

"Insult!" said Apperton; "have I not a heart to feel? have I not a head to discern? have I not a hand to execute? have I not devoted myself to your interests? am I not at this moment involved on every side by furthering the most promising schemes for your enrichment?"

"I admit it, my dear Apperton," said Maxwell.

"What have I done, then, sir," continued the stockbroker, "to have reproaches cast upon me? Could I have

been more interested for you—or more able; more assiduous—or more interested for you; or could I be more devoted to your child, or more attached to yourself and your family, if *I* had been a legitimate son of my father? And as to that being the ground of refusal to Somerford, it is idle; and only now mentioned to debase me, else why was I accepted?"

"I really do not comprehend," said Maxwell; "are you ——"

"Yes, sir, I am," said Apperton, "one of those despised of the proud—one of those, an alliance with whom is called a reproach to the last descendant of a long line of ancestors;—descended, indeed ——"

"But, Mr. Apperton, I never understood that fact," said Maxwell.

"You never enquired," said the stockbroker; "and as I was not in the habit of considering myself disgraced by my father's libertinism, or my mother's indiscretion, I never mentioned a story, which it seems you have now somehow or other discovered."

"I discovered!" said Maxwell; "not I, upon my soul and honour; acquit me of the wish or thought to wound or offend you. It is true, I never sought what you did not advance—I relied—and——"

"And you will not be deceived," said Apperton; "you sought an honest man for your daughter's husband—you have found one—let that content you, sir; and as for merit, there is surely more merit in founding a family than in inheriting the honours of an old one: it is better to be the root of the tree, than a withered, leafless branch, even at the top."

"Far be it from me to gainsay you," said Maxwell, who was nigh sinking through the floor of the apartment: "I said at the outset, that I admitted the weakness and folly of the prejudice I had inherited; and let me implore you, above all things, to believe that the allusion to the subject was made in an entire unconsciousness that any remark which fell from me could by any possibility be applicable to yourself."

Having said this, and having received a warm yet silent

shake of the hand from his friend Apperton, Maxwell, who had now the satisfaction of finding that he had destroyed the happiness of his daughter eternally for the sake of avoiding a misfortune only in the second degree, by connecting her with a man who in his own person entailed it upon his family in the first, felt anxious, if he could do it without any great abruptness or indelicacy, to ascertain more particularly the nature of the connection of which his son-in-law was the existing result, and if either of his parents were still living. Apperton, whether he saw the desire of his father-in-law, I know not, saved him the trouble of much circumlocution by reverting to the subject.

"I am satisfied," said Apperton, "by what you say, sir, that you did not mean to annoy me. But it is curious, isn't it, that the conversation should have taken the turn it has done, so soon after my marriage, and that such a topic never should have been started before; for if it *had*, I should have been as candid then as I am now; and still more curious is it, that your objection to Somerford should have been grounded on events, which, I suppose, in case we had discussed the question, would have driven *me* also from the connection."

Maxwell was for once in his life puzzled for an answer. He merely made a sort of noise between an affirmative and a grunt, entirely indescribable in writing, but which may perhaps be understood, if not expressed.

"My father," said Apperton, with all the suavity and simplicity of Norval himself, "was a merchant of London, and left me a very handsome sum of money; indeed, at his death, I found myself in possession, as I have before mentioned, of about thirty thousand pounds. This, in the course of business, has fructified, and I have every reason to be satisfied with my lot, and thankful to my parent, who, though not bound by any religious form to consider me as he did, never married, and bequeathed me at his death all he possessed."

"And," said Maxwell, determined to make a plunge, and know all the particulars at once, "your mother ——"

"Keeps the Cat and Cauliflower on Ratcliffe Highway. She married the landlord of the house, by whom she has

had six children; and although I have frequently suggested her retirement, and offered her any sum by way of annuity, she declines, upon the principle of sharing the fate of her honest husband who married her, knowing, as he did, all the circumstances of the case, and of providing for her family, to whom she is devotedly attached, by their own industry. She is now in her sixty-fourth year, and takes more relaxation than she formerly did. The sons chiefly carry on the business, and two of the daughters are very respectably married. These are circumstances which of course I do not ordinarily bring forward, but the conversation has produced the confession. One of the sons (in fact, one of my brothers, as I consider him,) you have seen at my office, where he is a clerk; and my efforts will be to place them all in time as respectably as I am able."

"And a very meritorious resolution, too," said Maxwell; "and pray what may be the present name of your respected parent?"

"Biddle," said the stockbroker.

It is impossible to do justice to Maxwell's feelings at this moment: his desire to be exceedingly kind and civil, and to praise Apperton's conduct, and to smile and appear composed—the result of the struggle was merely a repetition of the name three times, in three different tones—"Biddle—Biddle—Biddle,"—as if recollecting whether he had ever heard it before, as men sometimes rehearse the patronymics of individuals mentioned in society, with a view to recall circumstances connected with them, or whether one has seen them or met them. Not that Maxwell expected to call to mind any particular connection or association with the Biddles, but he did it habitually, and it answered as well as any thing else.

"Have you," said Maxwell, "informed Kate of this connection of yours?"

"No, I have not," replied the son-in-law; "nor perhaps is there any occasion for doing so; as I have already said, I seldom speak upon the subject. But, as it struck me that you had purposely ——"

"My dear Apperton," interrupted Maxwell, "you are now, I hope, convinced that I had no such intention; and

I am equally convinced of the propriety of your views with respect to Captain Somerford. Therefore, let us drop the subject altogether, and recur to what is, however, extremely disagreeable, the apparent necessity of your going to London to-morrow."

"It *is* disagreeable," said Apperton; "but the 'main chance' must be looked after. These repeated failures alarm me, I confess. I know some of the connections of Simpson, Hopkins, and Brown; and I am very much puzzled at their letter. *If* they *go*, it will be time for us to look about: however, we need not cry out before we are hurt; I ——"

"What! you two at it yet?" said Godfrey Moss, entering the room, and bringing with him an atmosphere redolent of tobacco-smoke, which hung round him like the eternal fragrance of the rose. "Well, and how is Katherine?"

The question was an awkward one; for so very deeply interested had they been in their conversation touching the questionable escutcheons of the Somerfords, the Appertons, and the Biddles, that Mrs. Alsop, who had been down twice to announce the state of her mistress's health, during her long interview with Edward, had preferred waiting outside the door and listening, to entering the apartment and making her speech. As soon, however, as Moss returned, she knew the confidential conference would end, and, in the most opportune nick of time imaginable, she again made her appearance just as Moss had put his interrogatory, in order to request Maxwell's presence up stairs. At this juncture, Edward came down; and Apperton, having accompanied his father-in-law to the invalid's chamber, the convivial Godfrey, aided by the said Edward, commenced the necessary preparations for that meal in which he much rejoiced, and which he thought would come in extremely well after the preparatory cigars and prefatory toddy of his respected friend on the Steyne.

CHAPTER VI.

There is a creature who has all the organs of speech, a tolerable capacity for conceiving what is said to it, together with a pretty proper behaviour in all the occurrences of common life; but naturally very vacant of thought in itself, and therefore forced to apply itself to foreign assistance: of this make is that man who is very inquisitive. STEELE.

THERE have been earthquakes which have swallowed up cities in a minute; and whirlwinds that have levelled moderate sized towns in a quarter of an hour — but never was devastation more rapidly or effectually produced, than that of Apperton's character and qualifications for a son-in-law in the mind of Maxwell by his own candid *exposé* of the truth. The very cunning manœuvrers, who go miles out of their way to avoid something disagreeable, and achieve something very desirable, are very frequently beaten at their own game by the veriest simpletons; and when they are, their mortification and anger are boundless. The reader may rely upon it that Maxwell's feelings were any thing but agreeable when he lay down to rest (sleep was out of the question) for the night, and began to revolve in his mind the events and discoveries of the preceding half dozen hours.

The evidence of Katherine's love for Somerford, the honourable conduct of the enriched and promoted youth, formed in Maxwell's mind a painful addition to the sorrow produced by the degradation of Apperton, about whose birth, parentage, and education he had never thought of enquiring; taking it for granted that a person so regular and methodical must have descended, correctly and properly, from a race of people as straightforward, matter-of-fact, as himself; for although the surgeon had a sort of intuitive respect for the aristocracy, he unconsciously permitted himself to fall into the very common error of believing that vice and immorality were strangers to what are called the middling ranks; or that if they ever did taint that class of society, it was a circumstance of very rare occurrence.

It is curious to see how insignificance, like charity,

covers a multitude of sin; of the peccadilloes of middling life nothing is known; and if any body did know of them, nobody would care about them. The importance of the characters alone give interest to the great drama of life. The billing and cooing of a couple of sparrows is matter of no great edification to any body, but a flirtation between a pair of elephants would be a matter for general wonderment and conversation.

The truth is, as I have already said, Maxwell was so dazzled by the wealth which Apperton had promised him, that he put himself entirely under his guidance; and having so far linked his fate with that of his minister, he neither saw, nor sought, any reason against binding him to his interest by ties of a nearer and dearer nature than those of mere professional duty; and thus it was that Katherine's happiness was sacrificed. That it *was* sacrificed, had been now made too evident to her father; and, therefore, when he found that his only objection to its completion existed in a much stronger degree in the case of Apperton than in that of Somerford, his feelings were beyond description painful.

In the morning, in consequence of new letters from London, the necessity of the stockbroker's departure for town was decided. The house of Simpson, Hopkins, and Brown *had* stopped payment, and all the worst anticipations of their trembling customers were realised. The horror-stricken countenance of the stockbroker too plainly spoke the greatness of his apprehensions, if not of his actual loss. His looks were wild, his manner restless. The illness of his wife seemed not a feather's weight upon his mind;—he groaned with agony as he sat at the breakfast table, and swallowed his tea, unconscious of what he was doing.

"Why, stockbroker," said Moss, "you have had bad news from town, havn't you?"

"Yes, sir," said Apperton, snappishly,—"very bad."

"And are you going up to London?" said Moss.

"At twelve o'clock," said Apperton; "at least I have sent Stevens to get a place if he can."

"And when do you come back?" said Moss.

"God knows," said Apperton.

"No chance of waddling is there?" said Moss.

"Of what, sir?" said Apperton, looking at him as if he could have eaten him.

"No serious loss, I hope," said Moss, moderating his voice, and judiciously changing his style with his tone, so as to suit the "fluctuations" in his companion's temper.

"Serious," said Apperton, "that time will show — two banking houses gone in six-and-thirty hours — at one of which I had an account — and at the other, for all I know, large deposits; however, my maxim is, nothing venture nothing have — and, perhaps, all may be right yet."

"'Tis a sad business to wind up the gaieties of the honeymoon," said Moss.

"Gaieties!" said Apperton. "Ha! ha! — there has been not much gaiety for me — Mrs. Apperton, I fancy, will feel my absence a great misfortune!"

"Misfortune!" grunted Moss, filling his mouth with a large square piece of toast and butter, as an excuse for not saying any thing more.

"I dare say, Mr. Moss, you know what I mean," said Apperton, whose pecuniary embarrassments seemed to have exacerbated his general character — "that Captain Somerford, sir — it seems very strange nobody could mention his name before me, during the whole time I knew the family."

"Somerford!" said Moss, not at all aware of the extent of Apperton's knowledge, and not at all anxious to enlighten him more than was absolutely necessary — "ah — Charles — Charles Somerford."

"My wife's former lover, Mr. Moss, I mean," replied the stockbroker, with a look of *fierté* of an entirely novel character: "his unlucky arrival here has caused all this illness of hers; his letter to her unravelled the mystery, and I find myself duped by Mr. Maxwell into marrying his daughter, and thus unconsciously destroying her hopes of happiness with the man she loved."

"Ah!" said Moss.

"And here I am," continued Apperton, "like a bad bill dishonoured after acceptance."

"And without even three days' grace," said Moss, who

could not resist the opportunity of carrying on the facetious figure.

"And for what, Mr. Moss," said Apperton, "has all this mischief been done?—to avoid the disgrace of marrying the young lady to a deserving man whom she loved, because he could not tell who his grandfather was. In a country like England, where the highest places are open to the lowest candidates, it would greatly check the course of promotion if the government were to be equally scrupulous; for my part, I scorn the pride that has been the source of Kate's unhappiness. I laugh at it, sir. Is it because my mother keeps the Cat and Cauliflower in Ratcliffe Highway, that I——"

Moss conceiving at this period of the conversation that his associate's brains had been turned by the fluctuation of the money market, drew back his chair, muttering a sort of curse at the words Cat and Cauliflower; and would, in all probability, have made the best of his way out of the room, had not Apperton's servant informed him that there was a place in the twelve o'clock coach, which he had secured for him.

"Then go up to Mrs. Apperton's maid," said Apperton, "and bid her tell Mr. Maxwell that I wish to speak to him; and ask at the same time whether I may see your mistress, as I have not above three quarters of an hour to stay."

"Am I to go with you to town, sir?" said Apperton's servant.

"No," said Apperton, "I go alone. Pack a small portmanteau, and put up my razors."

Moss thought the last part of these directions was given with a peculiar emphasis; and that those smooth-edged instruments were very likely to perform some other and more dreadful duty than simple shaving—so thoroughly was he convinced of the madness of his companion.

"Mr. Moss," said Apperton, when the servant had left the room, "there are turns in our lives which happen suddenly; and there is a saying, that 'misfortunes seldom come single.' I have been a very prosperous man in life—but the point is past; my prospects in London are any

thing but cheering; the alteration in public affairs is evident, and I have, I honestly confess, hazarded every thing on the chance. The discovery made in my private life by the unexpected, and I now say unfortunate, meeting of Kate and her old lover, goes to my very heart. I am an unpretending person, and not particularly polished or endowed with what are called accomplishments; but such as I am, Miss Maxwell accepted me. I was gratified in having such a wife, and anxious to do every thing in my power to please her and to serve her father; but he has deceived me; and she has deceived me, to oblige and obey him: and, in a few words, I'll tell you, Mr. Moss, I am a wretched man."

"My dear Apperton," said Moss, "you must not talk in this manner: whatever Kate's feelings may have been, or may be, towards Charles Somerford, you will never be wronged by her. She has plighted her faith to you, and to you will she be the same excellent, exemplary wife as if Somerford had never seen her."

"I know she will," said Apperton, "and therefore she is doomed to be a wretched woman all her life. Her existence is to be a struggle between her affection for one man and her duty towards another. The wind and the tide, when they go together, make the voyage sweet and pleasant; but when they are opposed, Mr. Moss, the storm and strife is continual, and the inconvenience, not to call it danger, is of no inconsiderable magnitude."

"But she——" said Moss.

The return of the servant with Mr. Maxwell's compliments, and his wish that Apperton should come to him then, to Mrs. Apperton's room, where he and Edward were, stopped the speaker in his progress; and Apperton's prompt obedience to the summons of his father-in-law put a period to the conversation.

When the agitated son-in-law had quitted the room, Moss began to think on "things in general," and the result of his deliberations was extremely unfavourable to the future peace and tranquillity of the family. In coming to this conclusion, he seemed more fully justified when he found that Apperton was on the point of going to the

coach-office to start for London, after a conversation with Maxwell of no great length, but of very considerable violence, and which indeed had been audible in the greater part of the house, and, consequently, of the neighbourhood. Reproaches were mutually cast by the contending parties; and Apperton, whose allegations against his father-in-law all bore upon the tender point of his deceptive conduct in forcing on his daughter's marriage, were retorted in sharper terms by Maxwell, who charged Apperton with neglect of his interests, and even a wilful misapplication of the funds which had been intrusted to him. Both parties were angry—both disappointed—both unhappy; while the gloomy appearance of the event, which affected them both, gave to the contention a character of carelessness and desperation not likely to change or moderate until some very great alteration in existing circumstances had occurred; and even then, Maxwell alone expected to reap advantage by change. In Apperton's view of his matrimonial connection, nothing could ever occur to destroy his confidence in his wife's honour and duty, for those he never doubted; but belief in her affections, which he held it to be impossible for any woman to divide, he had none.

The parting was stormy; and Moss, who remained ensconced in the parlour, was not displeased to find that Apperton did not think of turning in to bid *him* farewell. The old gentleman looked over the blind as he passed before the window on his way to the coach-office; and amply feeding both his nostrils from the tortoise-shell chest in which he carried his snuff, made one of his usual expressive noises, thereby meaning to imply, that he considered it extremely probable, under all the circumstances of the case, that he should never see the stock-brokering boy again.

"Is he gone, sir?" said Kate to her father, when he returned to her room.

"He is," said Maxwell, "and in anger too: his language was violent, and even coarse; and one allusion he made, which, I confess, has alarmed me."

"On what account?" said Katherine.

"Edward," said Maxwell, "go down to Moss for a few minutes: I wish to speak to your sister alone."

"That will I do, sir," said Edward; "or, perhaps, if you don't want me here for half an hour, take a stroll on the Cliff till luncheon time."

"As you please, my boy," said Maxwell.

"Hunt for my beauty," said Edward; "she seems to haunt me every where, perhaps she may be hovering about me here."

"No, no," said Maxwell, "you'll not see her *here*, depend upon it."

Edward obeyed his father's desire, and quitted the room.

"Kate," said Maxwell, in a tone and manner which marked the deep interest he took in her answer to the question he was about to put to his daughter, "Apperton has said a thing which may or may not bear the meaning I apprehend it does; you alone can satisfy me on that head."

"You may of course command me," said Kate.

"My character," said Maxwell, "my life, perhaps, depends upon his knowledge or ignorance of that affair, to which my timid and suspicious nature leads me to dread that he may have pointed. Now, Kate, calm yourself, or I will not proceed."

"I am calm, sir," said Kate; "to what do you refer?"

"You are his wife," said Maxwell; "and it may be, that, being so, you have considered it right to have no concealments from him—no mental reservation?"

"Alas!" said Kate, "you surely do not mean to reproach me now with my unwillingness to acknowledge Charles. I——"

"No, no, no," said Maxwell: "on that point, I would to Heaven the concealment had lasted to eternity—no harm could have arisen, with feelings like yours, and principles like Somerford's;—no—but there *are* circumstances—facts, Kate, of which you are in possession, not affecting him or yourself, that, when once united to Apperton, you might have felt it your duty to mention."

"To what do you allude, sir?" said Kate.

"I mean that secret, Kate," said Maxwell, "which you ripped from my bosom at the end of last year—that secret, on which my respectability—my character—my existence, as I have always said, depend."

"But, sir——" said Kate.

"Have you, at any moment," said Maxwell, "glanced at the event to Apperton?"

"Never, sir," said Kate; "and to no human being existing have I ever hinted one syllable concerning it. I lament to my very heart that mistaken zeal and too ardent affection put me in possession of that secret; but no—am I not sworn to you, by the duty I owe you, never to whisper it?—Ask Edward, my dear, dear brother, who has often urged me to confide it to him—I have rejected his prayer with scorn—and to Apperton, should I, do you think, have imparted what I refused to Edward?"

"Why," said Maxwell, "fraternal affection is one of the sweetest links in nature; but a husband, perhaps, might claim a confidence which no other connection has a right to demand."

"But he knows not of it," said Kate.

"He knows *of* the secret," said Maxwell; "and I thought, perhaps, he might have enquired the cause of the disturbance, and you might have told him."

"Not I," said Kate—"not one syllable has passed my lips."

"Then I am comparatively happy," said Maxwell. "In the temper in which Apperton has left me, a man would inconsiderately ruin his nearest and best friend, upon an impulse, which, perhaps, he might for all the rest of his life regret; and what he said in his anger led me to suppose that I was in his power."

"Assure yourself, my dearest father," said Kate, "he knows nothing of those circumstances."

Whatever those circumstances were, it was clear they must be rather important, since the manner and appearance of Maxwell were totally changed, after this conversation with his daughter: he was agitated and alarmed about his pecuniary speculations, and began to believe, as, indeed, he had told his son-in-law, that he had risked too much; but although that consideration naturally preyed upon his spirits, it was as a feather compared with the weight of alarm and apprehension under which he suffered, whenever the mysterious affair of his bed-chamber was alluded to.

Maxwell, who, with the tender care of the parent, combined all the skilful attention of the doctor, prescribed a short walk for Kate — gentle exercise in the sun and air; to which her simple-minded husband had thought proper to attribute her indisposition, her father considered as most essential to her recovery; and, accordingly, it was arranged that they should stroll along the cliffs, and bask, as it were, in the sunbeams, having the carriage in attendance; so that, should the weather suddenly change, or the delicate patient feel herself fatigued, she might change her course of proceeding, and return in the chariot. This expedition was to move after luncheon, and Moss bargained that he should take his share of exercise in the carriage in the first instance, to be ready to become Kate's companion on her return, if she found it necessary to avail herself of its accommodation.

According to the *programme* was this arrangement put into execution; and Kate, between her father and brother, proceeded to walk, while Godfrey and his snuff-box were established in the carriage. Edward, who never gave up the hope of seeing his fay, kept looking round in every direction, anticipating the awkwardness of a rencontre, which should by any accident bring the beautiful vision in contact with himself and his father simultaneously.

Maxwell, as it was natural he should, saw many faces he knew — bows answered bows — and smiles beamed upon him from various people, some of whom were indebted to him for having brought them into the world, and others who were equally obliged to him for having sent their rich relations out of it. Maxwell was a very popular man, and made it his study to be so; to be sure the world in general had not the opportunities of seeing him "at home," with which the reader has been indulged, and when abroad, his words were honied, and the lips from which they flowed dressed in the most winning smiles. Never is a naval captain known till one has sailed with him in his own ship, and on the blue water — never is a man understood until we have seen him divested of his world-going habits, and in the mental *dishabille* which gentlemen of all ranks and conditions are pretty much in the habit of wearing at home.

"Mercy on us!" said Maxwell, "here's Lord Hillingdon—of all the bores—what can we do?—he'll be sure to stop; and if he does, Kate, you will get chilled and cold."

"Why he won't stop long, perhaps," said Kate, who, meek and humble as she was, felt no disinclination at a transient *tête-à-tête* on the Steyne at Brighton, with a nobleman so known and so distinguished as the Earl of Hillingdon.

"But he *will* stop," said Maxwell: "he is a sort of inquisitor-general, and if he begins his usual interrogatories, we shall never shake him off; however, the Philistines are on us."

"Maxwell," said the Earl, "how do you do?—how do you do?"

"Quite well, my lord," said the surgeon, making a bow, and endeavouring to pass on. Here he was foiled.

"When did you come here?" said Lord Hillingdon, looking at Kate, while speaking to her father, the top button of whose coat his lordship firmly grasped.

"I came from town yesterday," said Maxwell.

"Your daughter, I presume," said his lordship, bowing to the young lady.

"It is, my lord."

"And pray, Miss Maxwell, where are you staying?" said his lordship.

Kate's blushing, and a sort of queer feeling of confusion, and something like shame, at being the wife of Apperton, betrayed her.

"My daughter is married, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Married!" said his lordship,—"long?"

"Not long."

"What is the name of the happy man?" said Lord Hillingdon.

"Apperton, my lord."

"Apperton!" said Lord Hillingdon; "odd name!—Apperton!—What! is he a doctor?"

"No, my lord," said Maxwell.

"A merchant, I suppose," said his lordship.

"A stockbroker, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Stockbroker!" said his lordship; "they are all great rogues, a'n't they?—I remember hearing so once;—and where are you staying?"

"On the East Cliff, my lord," said Kate.

"What an infernal situation!" said Lord Hillingdon; "bad houses—bad look out;—what could induce you to go there?"

"We could not get any other house, my lord," said Kate.

"Plenty of houses, now," said his lordship: "do you stay long?"

"Only a week or ten days," said Maxwell.

"Do you like Brighton?" said his lordship.

"Very much, my lord," replied Mrs. Apperton.

"Is your husband here?"

"No, my lord."

"What!" said his lordship; "so soon a truant? ha! ha! very bad taste, eh?—don't you think so, Maxwell, eh? Any news in town when you came away?"

"None that I heard of," said Maxwell.

"Good deal of distress about money, isn't there?" said Lord Hillingdon, "bankers breaking every day—are you going to the ball to-night, Mrs. —— what name did you say?"

"Apperton, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Apperton!" said his lordship, "deuced odd name—like apple-pye—is it Scotch?"

"I believe not," said Maxwell.

"I never heard the name before," said the nobleman.

No! thought Maxwell, perhaps your lordship has never seen the Cat and Cauliflower on Ratcliffe Highway.

"You *are* going to the ball?" said his lordship.

"No, my lord," said Kate, "I ——"

"Why don't you go?" asked his lordship.

"I did not hear there *was* a ball," replied Kate.

"Ah! that's because you live on the East Cliff," said his lordship: "do you like dancing?"

"I did, my lord, formerly," said Kate.

"Capital!" said his lordship, "but at your venerable age you abandon it, eh?—do you waltz?"

"I never have waltzed, my lord," said Mrs. Apperton.

"Upon principle, eh?" said his lordship.

"I do not admire the dance," said Kate; "it makes me so giddy after it is over."

"The cynics say, you must be giddy before you begin," said Lord Hillingdon: "which way are you walking?"

"Towards the West Cliff, my lord," said Maxwell.

"I'll turn with you," said his lordship: "is that your carriage?"

"It is, my lord," said the surgeon.

"Why do you have it follow you?" asked his lordship.

"Kate is not very well, and I have it as a refuge for her at hand, if she should feel tired," said Maxwell.

"Not well!" said Lord Hillingdon; "what's the matter?—she don't look ill."

"A head-ache," said Kate, as women always say, when any thing, even the heart-ache, ails them.

"I'm afraid a little pining for Mr. —— what did you say his name was?—Ap— Ap—?"

"Apperton, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Very odd name, to be sure, Apperton," said Lord Hillingdon: "have you as much practice as ever, Maxwell, eh?"

"Pretty much the same, my lord," said Maxwell.

"You must make a fine income, Maxwell," said his lordship: "I wonder you don't retire from business—nasty work, cutting, and sawing, and chopping, and all that, at your time of life, eh?"

"I love my profession," said Maxwell.

"What a very odd taste," said his lordship; "don't you think so, Mrs. —— I've forgot again."

"Apperton, my lord," said Kate. "I do not wonder at my father's affection for a profession which, before he entered it, he chose."

"Ah!" said the earl, "that's no rule. I entered the army by choice; but I assure you I was deucedly glad to get out of it. I suppose you stand third or fourth on the list now, Maxwell?"

"I am incompetent," said Maxwell, "to place myself."

"Surgery is better than physic," said the earl: "it

requires more skill and more study; the work is superficial, and a blunder betrays itself; a physician may work away at a fellow for a twelvemonth, and kill him at last, and yet nobody know that he did not die of disease; but with your craft a bad cut shows itself. I remember reading in a book, that a surgeon ought to have an eagle's eye, a lion's heart, and a lady's hand — eh! — did you ever hear that?"

"I have, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Do you recollect where?" said his lordship.

"I can't say I do at this moment," said Maxwell.

"I have seen it in Ray's Proverbs," said Edward, who had for the first time ventured a word.

"Ah!" said the earl, attracted by the sound of a new voice, "you are right — hey? — is this one of your family, Maxwell?"

"My son, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Indeed!" said his lordship; "what is he?"

"He is to be a lawyer, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Lawyers are all infernal rogues, eh?" said Lord Hillingdon; "upon my honour they tell me so. I don't mean judges and chancellors, and that sort of thing — but small lawyers, eh? — barrister, I suppose — eh?"

"Yes, my lord," said Edward Maxwell, to whom this interrogatory was put.

"Do you know much about it?" said his lordship, — "eh?"

"Not a great deal, my lord," replied the young man, wishing him, at the same moment, at the bottom of the sea.

"Coke upon Littleton, eh? — Blackstone, and all that," continued Lord Hillingdon; "my grandfather used to tell me, when he was a young man, that the lawyers wore their wigs and gowns wherever they went — eh? — droll that; — what — ladies do so now — but not lawyers. Where are you — Lincoln's Inn or Temple?"

"Lincoln's Inn, my lord."

"Very good, very good,

Lincoln's Inn for gentlemen,

eh? — that's quite right. I look upon professional men as gentlemen; hey? don't you? Law, physic, and divinity, eh! — the three male graces, eh? — don't you know, eh? — do you know the Smiths?"

"No, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Clever fellows — *they* said that — about the male graces, eh? Rejected Addresses: don't you know the Rejected Addresses — *you* do, I dare say, Mrs. App — ? what 's it again? — I always forget."

"Apperton, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Apperton — such a very odd name to be sure, eh!" said his lordship; "have you been on the chain-pier?"

"I was there yesterday," said Kate, and a thousand recollections flashed into her mind.

"So was I — saw such people come out of an Indiaman, eh!" said he, "have you never been at sea?"

"No, my lord," said Maxwell, "very little indeed."

"You didn't begin as naval surgeon, eh!" said the earl; "half the cleverest men in your profession have begun at sea, eh! — d' ye like sailing?"

"I cannot say I do," said Maxwell.

"I belong to the yacht club," said his lordship. "I have got a schooner — sharp — fast and compact. I should be very glad, Mrs. Apps — App — eh! — what is it?"

"Apperton, my lord," said Kate.

"Ah! — odd name to be sure," said the earl; "I should be very glad if you would do my Narcissa the honour of coming on board, if you should visit the Isle of Wight. Sea breezes are very wholesome, Maxwell, arn't they?"

"Very, my lord," said Maxwell, who was heartily sick of the earl and his interrogatories.

"When did you say you go to town?" said his lordship.

"In about ten days, my lord," repeated Maxwell.

"Town full when you came away?"

"Getting full, my lord."

"Do you know Lord Bryanston?" said his lordship.

"Not personally," said Maxwell.

" Here he comes," said the earl, " excellent creature — such a heart, — eh ! — don't he look it, eh ? "

Maxwell turned towards the nobleman who approached them, with a double feeling of gratification: he saw before him a fine venerable personage, whose aspect was at once noble and benevolent ; and, moreover, he saw in his lordship what he hoped would be a relief from the kind attentions of the earl ; but he was mistaken.

" Lord Bryanston, how do you do ? " said Lord Hillingdon ; " why, you are walking stoutly to-day."

" Yes," said the noble lord, " I flatter myself that King Gout, who generally torments his subjects at Brighton, is abdicating."

" If he return," said the earl, " I can do no better than recommend my friend Maxwell to your lordship's notice, as a very able antagonist of the fiery monarch."

Maxwell bowed to Lord Bryanston, as in duty bound, and Lord Bryanston bowed in return.

" I have often had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Maxwell's name," said Lord Bryanston, at the same time looking as if he was endeavouring to recollect where.

" Good morning, my lord," said Maxwell, anxious to disentangle himself from the peerage.

" I 'll be after you in five minutes," said Lord Hillingdon: " keep along the Cliff, and I shall overtake you."

" I trust not," *mentally* ejaculated the surgeon, who had no sooner cleared the peer, than he bore up East Street towards North Street, thus adroitly destroying the chance of being overtaken ; first having deposited Kate in the carriage with Moss, and directed the coachman to take the full range of both cliffs, from Hove to Roedean, upon the saving principle of driving " between the Pikes," universally adopted by dowagers and others of economical propensities.

" I do not recollect," said Lord Bryanston, to his noble companion, " ever to have seen Mr. Maxwell before : but I have had occasion to know that he is a man of most amiable character and benevolent disposition. I am sorry that I leave Brighton to-morrow, or I should very much like to have made an acquaintance with him ; and, indeed,

now you have broken the ice for me, I could do so with much less difficulty than I could before — umph!" continued his lordship — musing — "and that young lady is his daughter, I presume."

"Exactly," said Lord Hillingdon.

"A nice looking, lady-like girl," said Lord Bryanston, who seemed anxious to continue the conversation.

"She is a bride," said the marquess.

"Married is she?" said Lord Bryanston: "do you happen to recollect the name of her husband."

"Upon my life, no," said the marquess; "it is something like apple-pye, but I never can recollect it — it's a deuced odd name: a name I never heard before. And so you are off to-morrow?"

"Yes," said Lord Bryanston, "not to remain for any great length of time. I have a ward, a young lady, who is troubled with a large fortune, which I am troubled to take care of; and she is coming to town to be presented, and to come out, and dance herself into fashion during the season. However, I suppose I sha'n't have her long on hand; eight or ten thousand a year, and a pretty person, are likely soon to be snapped up in the matrimonial market of London. So that if constant vigilance is required to see that she does not fall into bad hands, this watchfulness will not be required for any very long period. By the by, Lord Hillingdon, do you happen to recollect what profession Mr. Maxwell's son-in-law follows?"

"A — what d' ye call those people?" said his lordship, "psha — a — stockbroker."

"A stockbroker!" repeated Lord Bryanston, "umph!" and again he seemed to muse. — "Can I do any thing in town for you, Lord Hillingdon?"

"Nothing, nothing," said the earl; "I shall be up myself about the end of the week. Adieu, I must overtake my friends;" saying which, the noble lords separated; and the earl hastened onwards in the hope of catching Maxwell, and recommencing his questions: for, as the reader may have observed, the propensity to enquire was never present when he was in the society of his equals; it was from his inferiors he hoped to gain information upon all subjects, and an insight into the ways and man-

ners of a class of society in which he did not ordinarily mix: besides, he felt that it gave him consequence to catechise his humble companions; and his questions, as it may have been perceived, were more general in their bearings than useful in their objects.

Kate, on her return home, felt considerably better for her little excursion; nor was Apperton's absence displeasing to her in her present state of mind: conscious as she was of his opinion of the nature of her present affection for *him*, and her former attachment to Charles, she could not associate with him tranquilly or comfortably. As he had too truly said, this intercourse, while her feelings were still in a state of perturbation, was little else than a struggle between duty and inclination; and she breathed a silent prayer that his occupations in London might, for the present, detain him there.

Maxwell, although suspicious of the nature of her sentiments, and her secret wishes with regard to the return of her husband, was all kindness and gentleness to his poor wounded daughter: he saw the ruin he had caused; and Apperton's confession, made in a moment of mistaken pride and anger, having reduced the husband of his choice even below the standard of her former lover, he sought by every possible act of paternal love and affection to soothe poor Kate's sorrows; of which, over-reached as he had been, he could not but consider himself the real cause.

Edward met scarcely any body he knew at the sea-side, and his chief pleasure was watching the wide waste of waters, thinking (poor young gentleman!) that his beloved and lost Maria was borne upon its bosom to some distant land. All society now was painful to him, except that of his sister, with whom, in his father's absence, he could talk of his sorrows, and the final fiat pronounced by the old gentleman against his daughter's happiness.

In this state of feverish agitation and painful suspense, the family party were united alone in one wish; namely, to hear the result of Apperton's financial proceedings, in the issue of which, it now appeared but too certain, that the fate of the whole family was most seriously and vitally involved.

CHAPTER VII.

Oh, sacred sorrow! He who knows not thee,
Knows not the best emotions of the heart;
Those tender tears that humanise the soul,
The sigh that charms, the pang that gives delight:
He dwells too near to cruelty and pride,
And is a novice in the school of virtue. THOMSON.

THE state of mind in which Somerford reached London may be easily imagined. The infidelity of a long-loved being falls upon the heart a heavy, dreadful blow; and if in common cases the infliction is terrible, in Somerford's it was doubly so. In losing the object of his affection, his only tie to England was dissolved: her family were almost, if not quite, the only persons he knew in his native country. The home of his heart, to which he had looked forward with longing eyes, was closed against him, and he felt, when he reached the metropolis, alone in the multitude.

Of his mother, who had died during his absence, who should speak to him? he had heard no particulars even of her death, the intelligence of which had been conveyed to him in a letter from Maxwell: he knew of no relations that he had, nor any friend to turn to, for consolation or advice. He was ignorant of the true cause of Maxwell's decided disinclination to a connection with him; and from not knowing the real character of his mother's connection with the Woodley family, of which she was always considered by *him*, and all who knew them, the daughter, he was led to hope that there might be some relation of hers, or of his father's, still living. But upon this latter point he had little faith; since he recollected to have heard, not only Maxwell, but his father himself, state that he was an only son of an only son, an argument he used to adduce in favour of having married an inferior, saying, that being so completely alone in the world, he had nobody to please but himself.

Although Kate Maxwell's marrying had so decidedly separated her from Somerford, and closed the door of her father's house against him, there was still an aching, longing pain about his heart, which proved to him how deeply

rooted was the feeling which attached him to the family; the first hour he passed in London was devoted to a walk to visit the well-known street in which his youthful hours had been so happily passed; he stopped before it, and gazed upon the door, and on the very steps that led to it, and a thousand reflections and remembrances came into his mind. From that door how frequently had he departed with the dear object of his first and only love for scenes of gaiety and parties of pleasure! Oh! there *was* a time, when he was welcomed into it by the cheering looks of friendship and the sweet smiles of love; now, it stood sullenly shut against him, and the closed windows of the rooms, in which his days of boyhood and careless joy were spent, seemed to announce the death of all his hopes and pleasures. Yes—Kate was gone—and gone—to be the wife of another!

There *are* streets and houses in this great city of ours which cannot fail to conjure up such thoughts as these, in minds not given much to sorrow; and strike daggers into hearts which those who know them not believe incapable of such a feeling: Somerford himself had scarcely understood the full extent of his unhappiness, till this visit to the well-remembered scene of all his former joys had brought it clearly to his view.

Charles, at the period of which I now write, did not believe it possible that he could ever see or speak to any of the Maxwell family again. Kate, whose heart was on the rack after the receipt of his letter, felt that she ought not to reply to it, as the wife of Apperton; but candid and ingenuous as she was, she imparted to her father a wish that *he* should, as far as possible, exonerate her from the hateful charge of fickleness and falsehood and explain to Charles the real state of her heart and mind when she accepted Apperton.

The task, it must be confessed, was somewhat difficult; for Maxwell, though kind and good, was, as he himself said, proud; and for him to descend to particulars with Somerford, which could not fail, in their disclosure, to exhibit something very like duplicity in his own conduct, as regarded the termination of the correspondence between

Charles and Katherine, and which throughout must evince to the young man a disinclination on her father's part to a matrimonial connection, which could not be accounted for, without needlessly wounding his feelings, was indeed a trial. Maxwell felt no disinclination to meet, to see, or even to receive his former *protégé;* but Kate forbad a renewal of the acquaintance under the circumstances; she felt that she had fallen,—perhaps by the influence of misrepresentation and even falsehood, which had been called in to the consummation of Somerford's rejection; but she was sure they could not now live upon terms like those on which they had lived before his departure.

Whatever were eventually to be the results of Mrs. Apperton's request to her father on this point, it is clear that Somerford, agitated as he was on his arrival in the metropolis by a thousand contending feelings, was not likely to desire that a reconciliation, or a renewal of his correspondence with the elder Maxwell, should (and he never believed it would) take place. His enquiries were particularly touching the death of his mother.

Somerford's affection for his surviving parent, at the time of his departure, was exemplary; and frequently his pride had taken fire at what even then appeared to him her almost studied exclusion from Maxwell's house, while he was so favourably and flatteringly received under its roof; yet he could not but admit, that her manners and habits were not so polished as those of Miss Maxwell: and when she was invited, on certain festivals, such as Christmas-day, the birth-day of her son, or Maxwell's birth-day, or any of those family celebrations, at which she was bidden to assist, he not only saw by her conduct, but knew from herself, that she disliked the trouble of playing fine, and preferred her own snuggery, as she called her lodgings, and such associates as she could select from amongst a class of people, highly respectable in their way, but who were by no means versed in the little delicacies of superior society.

Still she was his mother; and now that the turn of circumstances had induced him to look at the conduct of the Maxwell family with suspicion, if not with bitterness, a

thousand doubts flashed into his mind as to the treatment they had shown his parent after his departure from England. When he was here before, his whole heart was with the Maxwells — love, friendship, affection, and esteem, every kindly feeling of his nature, they swayed and controlled; but now the link was broken. From what Kate herself had said, he knew that the elder Maxwell had played him false in his letters, as far as *she* was concerned: why might not the coldness, which he had noticed as a youth, and which the family evinced towards his parent, have been so much increased as to have been converted eventually into neglect and contempt? If it had been so, would his sword rest in its scabbard while a Maxwell lived? would he not avenge the slightest insult that had been cast upon his lone and helpless parent? His course was soon resolved on. He knew the village where she died; the house in which she had breathed her last; the name of her, whose house it was; and who, as Maxwell had told him, had most carefully attended her during her last illness. Thither would he go, see the woman so spoken of, and ascertain from *her*, whatever particulars might be attainable respecting the last hours of his poor mother's existence.

Apperton, who reached London in the middle of the day following that on which his *rival* had arrived in it, was infinitely more worried than the captain, except as far as filial solicitude went, because the comfortable establishment of the Biddles rendered any anxiety of his, on their account, wholly unnecessary: but affairs in the city had taken a most serious turn; loss upon loss had accrued; and the bolstering system having been adopted, the whole object of the enterprising stockbroker was to delay, as long as possible, a crisis which, to his prospective eye, began to appear inevitable. Acceptances which he held to a serious amount had been dishonoured: the securities offered for the money were unavailable; and the fresh and increasing failures on every hand began terribly to alarm him.

Maxwell as yet reposed in comparative tranquillity; although in less than ten days his name and solvency would come to be questioned. Maxwell, the proud and ambitious Maxwell, had not only placed the whole of his personal

property at the disposal of his son-in-law, for the purchase of shares and bonds, and slices of loans, and other wonderful speculations, but had gone the length of accepting bills to the amount of more than thirty thousand pounds, his name being, upon the strength of what he was known to possess as a fundholder, very well received by the doers of such commodities.

In addition to this responsibility, Apperton had persuaded him to remove his account from a banker's at the west end of the town, where he had kept his money for years, to the banker's (that is, to one of his bankers,) in the city. To the floating credit there, Apperton had always looked for an immediate supply for casual expenses, in case that greater affairs should not make their returns exactly as they were anticipated. His embarrassment may be conceived, when, on the day of his arrival, he found amongst others the very firm that he had recommended to his father-in-law's patronage bankrupt!

His first care, upon the aforesaid bolstering system, was to get five hundred pounds and send it per post to Maxwell, at Brighton, in the letter which announced the failure of the bank, where at the moment his balance was not very much more than that sum. That manœuvre he thought would have the double effect of soothing the old gentleman's mind, as to any present inconvenience, and very much exalt the character of his active connection, who had taken such prompt means to assure him, in the most satisfactory manner, not only of his own safety, but of the power his son-in-law and monitor possessed of smoothing any difficulties as soon as they occurred.

The reader may begin to perceive that the causes of all the toil and trouble of this once peaceful, happy, and united family of Maxwell, had their origin in pride and ambition. Pride it was, that rejected Somerford; ambition — the small ambition of wealth — it was, that made Apperton acceptable; but the justice of Providence seemed likely to thwart the narrow views of fallible man; we have already found that Apperton was even more objectionable in point of birth than Somerford, and it seemed now more than probable, unless a change of affairs rapidly took place, that

Somerford would shortly prove the richer as well as the better man.

Somerford, however, was destined to meet with information new to him, and decidedly unexpected. On the second day after his arrival in town, he proceeded from Ibbotson's hotel, to which he had been recommended by Mr. Macleod, his *compagnon de voyage* from the Cape, to the village of Stockwell, in Surrey, where his late respectable mother died. Stockwell, so celebrated as the last residence of the "Angels" upon earth, and famed in all the magazines and newspapers of the day for the "wonder" which bears it name, and which, if true, is indeed of all wonders the most wonderful.

Thither did the dutiful son repair, and finding, without any difficulty, the residence of the old gentlewoman with whom his mother had latterly lived, and in whose house she died, introduced himself to her, and was as cordially received as he could have wished or expected by one who had long cherished a warm and affectionate friendship for his parent.

"She lived with me, sir," said Mrs. Anderson (so was the mistress of the house named), "from about a year after you went abroad to the hour of her death. She was a great loss to me; for she was so kind, and good-natured, and affable, that we all loved her. My daughter's little children used to call her mother. Dear lady! she had no pride nor conceit about her, and we all lived here together just like one happy family."

Somerford was deeply affected at the genuine tone in which the poor old lady spoke her feelings with regard to his parent.

"And pray," said he, "during my poor mother's illness, did Mr. Maxwell's family pay her much attention?"

"The old gentleman," said Mrs. Anderson, "never failed to visit her once or twice a day; and as for Miss Katherine, she did not quit her side till all hope was over. Oh, sir! she is a sweet, good young lady, and a thousand pities it is that you and she were ever parted. I've heard all the story from your poor dear mother herself—but perhaps even yet you may come together,—who knows?"

"That, I fear, is past praying for," said Charles: "Miss Katherine, that *was*, is married."

"Married, sir!" exclaimed the old lady: "dear me, only think of that! I never heard a word about it—has she been married long, sir?—it wasn't in the newspapers."

"Not very long," said Somerford; "scarcely a week, I think."

"And who is she married to, sir?" said Mrs. Anderson.

"To a Mr. Apperton," said Somerford.

"Apperton!" repeated Mrs. Anderson; "not Johnny Apperton sure, that was at school two-and-thirty years ago at Streatham, long before these houses were built. What is he, sir?"

"I believe a stockbroker," said Somerford.

"Ah, I know," said Mrs. Anderson: "there's a great many of them living about here—that's the same man, rely upon it. He was the son of old Wagstaff, that used to live on the common, long before you were born."

"Wagstaff!" said Somerford: "how came his name Apperton then?"

"That was his mother's name," said Mrs. Anderson: "she was a very good-looking woman in her time, and if it is she as I mean, she is lawfully married, and her name now is Biddle, and her husband is very well to do, and keeps the Cat and Cauliflower in or near Ratcliffe Highway."

"What a curious combination of names!" said Somerford: "Biddle and Wagstaff—but you surely must be mistaken."

"No, sir, I'm not," said the old gentlewoman. "His father, although he was only a natural son, left him a large sum of money, and he set up as a stockbroker, and has made a deal more of it, they say; and, to my certain knowledge, has been very kind to his mother, and the children she has had by her husband Biddle."

"But isn't it rather a strange connection for the Maxwell family?" said Somerford.

"It is, indeed," said Mrs. Anderson: "but that's the way of the world, sir; they strain at gnats and swallow camels. After Mr. Maxwell's sending you abroad, as your

poor dear mother always said he did—she never quite forgave him for *that*—to put an end to your sweethearting with his daughter, to think of his putting up with Johnny Apperton. Why, you know, in your case it wasn't half so bad, because *your* poor dear mother *was* an honest woman, whatever his might have been."

"What!" said Somerford. "How d'ye mean? *My* mother!—what——"

"Why, sir," said Mrs. Anderson, who concluded that Somerford must be acquainted with his own history; "I mean that your mother—but la! dear me! perhaps you don't know the story—you look pale, sir—I am sure I have done wrong—I thought of course you knew the reason why Mr. Maxwell never would consent to—dear sir——"

"Stay! stay!" said Charles, "I shall be quite well in a moment. Don't stir—don't stir—only let me—that is, if it implicates my mother—if any blame is to be cast upon her—if I am to hear any thing against her memory, let it be not here, where she lived—where she died—and where I feel her spirit present."

"Oh, sir!" said Mrs. Anderson, "there's no harm going to be said of dear Mrs. Somerford: all that can be said is, that she was not the daughter of those who passed for her parents; but an orphan—perhaps, an orphan—and brought up by them as their child, and always considered so, until, on her death-bed, Mrs. Woodley, of whom you have always heard spoken as your grandmother, confessed that she was not their own; whose child she was, neither she nor your father ever knew."

"And is this the mystery, then?" said Somerford: "is this the cause of my eternal separation from Kate—the wreck and ruin of my hopes—have I been spurned for this?"

"Yes, by Mr. Maxwell," said Mrs. Anderson, "who has bettered his daughter by marrying her to Johnny Apperton, the son of poor Mary Biddle, of the Cat and Cauliflower on Ratcliffe Highway. Often and often did your poor mother say how vexed your father was, that they ever knew so much, and yet no more. If old Mrs.

Woodley had died and revealed no part of the secret, all would have gone happily; but to tell what she did, and conceal the rest, went to unsettle the minds of both your parents, and to cast a doubt over the legitimacy of your mother, without any one advantage to any human being."

"In what a situation this circumstance places me," said Charles; "but I thank Heaven that this accidental discovery throws no blame, no imputation, upon the character of my beloved parent. And no clue was left by which to trace her relations?"

"Not the slightest, sir," said Mrs. Anderson. "I don't know, sir," continued she, "whether you ever saw a pocket-book of your poor mother's, in which she kept some old letters of your father's, and some—I'll show them to you, sir;" saying which, she proceeded to open a drawer, where the valuables were stored: "here—here is a little thing that she set great store by, for her dear son's sake."

Saying which, the old gentlewoman deposited upon the table a small and much-worn work-box, containing scissors, thimbles, and the ordinary apparatus of such things. It was not much to look at; but Somerford, soldier as he was, burst into tears at the sight of it. For years he had seen it close to his mother's hand—a thousand times had he been sent to fetch it from one room to another for her use, and as often had been rewarded for his little trouble by a kiss.

"And here," added the old lady, "is a book that did belong to *you*, I think, sir, of which she was very fond."

It was a poor, shabby-looking grammar and spelling-book, on the first page of which was Charles's name, written by himself, as a proof of his skill in penmanship.

From this book his mother had taught him to read; in the margin were the marks yet visible made with her own pencil to divide his lessons; and when he saw them, he could recall the events of almost every day in which they had been made, and too well remembered how he stood beside her knee, and repeated his task, while her arm was fondly placed round his little neck. It brought all her cares and kindness to his memory at once; but she was

gone for ever; and the sight of all these objects only more clearly exhibited to poor Somerford the contrast between her fondness and affection, and the sad and desolate state in which he now stood.

Mrs. Anderson saw how much he was affected; but she saw that the expression of his sorrow gave him relief.

"She was bed-ridden for some months before her death," said the old lady, "so that at last her departure was a release: she had not been out of this little room for upwards of fifteen weeks before her death," continued the old lady, at the same time pushing open a door by which the apartment they were in communicated with a neat bedchamber facing the garden.

"And," said Somerford, bursting into an agony of grief which he could not suppress, "did—did she die here?"

The old lady answered him not, but bowed her head.

Charles saw her meaning, and, throwing himself on the death-bed of his mother, shed a flood of tears.

And need he be ashamed of such a natural weakness? No! Tears such as his are no reproach, and leave no stain upon the manly cheek.

The poor old lady, who had thus touched the chord which vibrated through the heart of Somerford, saw with dismay and alarm the effect produced by what she had done; but Charles soon recovered himself, and entreated her to be composed.

"Ay, sir," said she, "if poor dear Mrs. Somerford could know what a kind, affectionate son you are, she would rest happier in her grave. Come, sir, let us leave this room; I was very wrong to show it you—I——"

"No," said Somerford—"no, I shall be better now—I feel my heart relieved; and I am glad to know that my friends, the Maxwells, were kind to her to the last. But," added he, evidently wishing to change the subject which had so deeply affected him, "you have strangely unsettled my mind about my family."

"Oh, sir!" said Mrs. Anderson, "why worry about that? Your father was an excellent man, and your mother an exemplary woman; does not that suffice to

set your heart at rest? Many of the lords the King makes would be sadly puzzled if his Majesty commanded them to find out their grandfathers."

"And yet," said Charles, "it is that blot on my escutcheon which exiled me from England, and has lost me Kate for ever. I never can cease to recollect that."

"Perhaps it is all for the best, sir," said the old lady; "we are poor blind creatures, and dare not presume to question the will and ways of Providence. You are now independent, free, and——"

"Desolate," said Somerford: "in my marriage with Miss Maxwell I should have secured around me connections, friends, relations, of which, by your own account, I have none."

"Ay, sir, that's more than I can say," said Mrs. Anderson, "or you can say. You may be the King's grandson, for all we know."

Somerford, who thought the supposition savoured somewhat of treason, and whose ambition had never been exalted to so high a pitch, checked his venerable companion in her imaginative flights; and after some farther conversation on indifferent subjects, quitted her, and returned to town, satisfied with his visit, the paying of which seemed, after what had occurred, to have been the fulfilment of a duty, but sadly tormented with the mysterious cloud by which the root of his family tree was obscured. It entirely unsettled him: any old man whom he met, for aught he knew, might be his grandfather; and this visionary relationship so perpetually haunted him, that scarcely did he pass a stranger in the street without feeling the probability that he might be his nearest relative upon earth.

Yet amidst all this worry there was something like consolation;—all misery, like all pleasure, is comparative, and Somerford felt satisfied that, disagreeable as was the state of doubt in which he now existed, with regard to his ancestors, it was, at all events, far preferable to the wretched certainty of his successful rival, whose descent was not even mysterious, and whose near alliance to the house of Biddle was matter of notoriety to all who knew him in his early

days: nor did he, with all his kindness of heart and smouldering affection for the Maxwells, feel any very great vexation when he reflected upon the total failure of the old gentleman's schemes for Kate's advancement, by rejecting him, and accepting a son-in-law far below him in the scale of legitimacy. How Mr. Maxwell had been induced to play so strange a game, Charles could not very readily comprehend; but from what he had seen he was quite certain of one thing—that Kate herself had had no participation in the manœuvres by which it had been brought about.

As to the feelings of Maxwell towards Charles, it is but fair to say that they were still most kindly; nor was their natural tendency in his favour at all weakened by the useless discovery of the real state of Apperton's circumstances. The surgeon felt that, on a point of pride, he had made his daughter completely wretched, by the rejection of the man she fondly loved, and now would have given the world to recall all that had passed. This desire came too late, and yet the operation of the feeling upon Maxwell's mind was to increase his regard for Somerford: as I have already said, he felt, and was desirous that Kate should feel it quite possible to receive the captain again as a friend of the family—as one who had in early life been loved, and who now appeared in a different, but scarcely less interesting, character. But Kate was fortunate enough to possess a large portion of that rare commodity, common sense; and continued strenuously and decidedly to decline bringing herself to a trial, the result of which could be satisfactory to none of them; so that her father found himself, after a long argument with his daughter, eventually reduced to the necessity she had urged of writing to Charles, in terms of warm friendship and congratulation, but without even hinting at the possibility of their returning to their old intimacy. This letter he despatched to the hotel, and Somerford received it with pleasure, and read its contents without surprise, though not without emotion. He, like Mrs. Apperton, was fully convinced that their acquaintance ought to terminate, although he admitted to himself, that he should be grateful for one short interview, if she felt

inclined to grant it, in order to hear from her own lips the details of a change which he could not yet account for, even although, in the course of their hurried conversation at Brighton, she had more than hinted that her father's double-dealing with regard to the correspondence had no small share in bringing about the results so much desired by him, and so much lamented by herself and Somerford.

There could be no question as to the sort of answer Charles should return to Maxwell's letter; and accordingly he sat down and wrote at length an explanation of his views and feelings, together with a statement of his progress in India, his successful career, and the great object of his ambition now so sadly blighted. He added, that he had been ordered to proceed to Cheltenham; but that when he returned, he should be most happy to take his old protector by the hand, and extremely glad to see Edward, whose stride in life, during his absence, had put him, in all probability, beyond his personal knowledge, without a fresh introduction.

The continued absence of Apperton from Brighton was a continued, a great relief to Kate, who found, in the society and conversation of her brother, the necessity for an effort at appearing happy and contented. Indeed she anticipated the return of her husband as one of the most dreadful events that could occur; and all the consolation she had was talking of Somerford to her brother, who reciprocated her confidence, by bestowing upon her all the tediousness of a lover, while eulogising his unknown, lost Maria.

"My father," said Edward, "appears to have a vast many secrets; there is the great secret of which you are in possession—there is the secret of this young lady—there is clearly a secret reason for his disinclination to your marriage with Somerford—and, from what he threw out at breakfast to-day, I'll be hanged if I don't believe there is another secret connected with Apperton. We are grown prodigiously mysterious in our affairs."

"The secret with which I, unfortunately, have become acquainted," said Mrs. Apperton, "can have no connection with your secret; and if there is any secret with regard to Charles, most assuredly he is not in it himself, or else I

think, in those days when our thoughts and hopes were in common, I should have been mistress of it."

"What an inestimable blessing is candour," said Edward; "all underhanded manœuvring, all crooked politics in families are so debasing, so unworthy. Now all this stuff about the young lady—why should I not be trusted? my father says that she is amiable and excellent herself, but that a connection with her would bring ruin upon *him*, and disgrace upon us all, and yet he walks about the streets with her himself."

"What does he say?" said Katherine; "that a connection with an innocent and amiable girl would be destruction?"

"He has repeated it over and over again," replied Edward, "and has bound me never to mention the subject again, or even her name."

"Your obedience," said Mrs. Apperton, "does no appear to be quite so scrupulous as mine."

"Oh! but he says," said Edward, "that your secret is, after all, nothing—merely important as a test of your fidelity, but, in itself, a trifle."

"A trifle!" said Katherine. "Heaven only can tell; at least, I am sure I cannot, what the consequences would be to my father, were I to reveal what I saw."

"He speaks," said Edward, "of my adventure with Maria as something extraordinary—as a coincidence; that, if it were written in a romance, it would be considered almost impossible; and yet, although she was present at your wedding, of course, upon some principle of affection towards our family, she, of all human beings, is the one with whom any sort of intercourse, on our part, would be destruction."

"Stay," said Kate, a thought evidently flashing like lightning into her mind; "she was in mourning, you said?"

"Yes," said Edward.

"And met my father," murmured Katherine, "and at the church afterwards. I see it all; I know her—the mystery is unravelled—at least, I think it must be so—and if it be, it is, as my father says, a most extraordinary circumstance."

"Tell me, my dear Kate," exclaimed Edward, his countenance brightening into a summer sunshine,—"tell me, I conjure you, what is it all?"

"Never again," said Katherine, "must you mention this subject, even to *me*, Edward; and if you love me, as I think you do, never, as you value my peace of mind, or wish me to live happily with our father, hint, in his presence, at what I have inadvertently said. I *do* believe I know who your Maria is; but *you* never must."

"Rely upon it," said Edward, "you are right in your conjecture, Kate, whatever it may be: at least, so I consider from the decision to which you have thus rapidly come, as to my never having any thing further to say to the young lady; but surely you can tell me whether any tie connects her to our family beyond some circumstance—some——"

"If she be what I suppose," said Kate, "for I have never seen her, and therefore cannot satisfy myself of her identity by your description of her, her tie to us, or rather to our father, is gratitude; and if I can judge another's feelings by my own, gratitude beyond expression. I *may be* mistaken altogether; for I have never exchanged a syllable on the subject with my father; yet, from his vehemence in denouncing her, mingled with wonder at the strange coincidence of circumstances which brought you in contact with her, I incline strongly to believe in the justice of my suspicions."

"This is worse than all, Kate," said Edward; "now the tempting fruit actually hangs within my reach, and yet I must not grasp it. Kate, too, with whom I have no disguise—from whom I keep no secret: besides, to this you are not pledged—your father has never bound you to silence on this point, although he has tied me down never to refer to the subject."

"Why did you not obey him?" said Katherine; "if you had not recurred to your Maria, as you call her, and mentioned some new circumstances to me, I never should have guessed,—for, after all, it is but guess who she was; now that you have let me so far into the history, I must, like my parent, entreat you never to urge me on the point again, nor, indeed, even to recur to it."

"If Apperton," said Edward, "desired you to tell *him*, are you not bound to obey a husband?"

The very name of Apperton, coupled as it was with the idea of command, in his marital capacity, struck upon Kate's ear like a death-knell: no art, no effort, could conceal her feelings towards her "other half," and a silence of some minutes succeeded the question.

To what a state had the commands of her father, and the events of a few days, thus reduced the unhappy Katherine; and how strange—fortunate, she considered it—was the absolute necessity which had sent the bridegroom away so early in his matrimonial career. It was clear that something preyed heavily upon Maxwell, who now secluded himself from his family, and passed his hours between reflections upon the birth, parentage, and education of his son-in-law, and a feverish anticipation of the results of his financial manœuvrings: every thing seemed to go wrong, and in the whole family there was not to be found one grain of happiness to counterbalance the opposing heap of sorrow and disappointment.

Moss was the only individual of the party who kept the even tenor of his way: indeed, he grumbled rather less than when there was less cause for dissatisfaction; for Godfrey was one of those persons who are worried by trifles, but whose minds strengthen with the urgency of a case; and now that he saw real difficulties and embarrassments growing around him, he endeavoured to divert the elder Maxwell's attention from the contemplation of them, and attract Kate's thoughts from the subject by which he was convinced they were wholly occupied. But the blow had not yet fallen, which neither mirth nor philosophy could avert, nor prudence nor energy withstand.

CHAPTER VIII.

Whether we shall meet again I know not;
Therefore one everlasting farewell take,
For ever and for ever farewell, Cassius.
If we do meet again, why we shall smile;
If not, why then this parting was well made. SHAKSPEARE.

MAXWELL, whose reliance upon Apperton's high credit and responsibility was entire and unqualified, felt considerable

relief in receiving the full amount of the balance which he had left in the hands of the insolvent bankers; and related the fact of its arrival to Edward, as a proof of the admirable activity of his son-in-law. This was exactly what Apperton had anticipated; he knew enough, if not of human nature generally, at least of his father-in-law particularly, to be quite sure that he would catch at the little luring bait he had prepared for him, and, while greater events were in progress, amuse himself with the prospect of security from misfortune which this well-timed manœuvre would hold out.

Edward knew nothing of the sort of business in which Apperton was an adept, and Kate of course could form no judgment of financial matters; but she never reverted to the subject of her father's pecuniary engagements with her husband, without thinking of the one brief, but pithy conversation which she had had with him, relative to the great obligations under which the surgeon ought to consider himself for the exertions he had made in his behalf. She could not fail to remember the strange alternative he had in that conversation mentioned; the chances amounting to something which, to her, seemed almost like desperation, to which he had alluded; and when she found that the success of his speculations had not been so very triumphant, her anxious feelings suggested the dreadful reverse which she had ventured to insinuate might occur; and which Apperton himself appeared to look forward to with fear and trembling.

Kate's situation was, to be sure, most peculiar and most distressing, nor was it rendered at all less irksome by the perpetual remarks and observations of Moss; who, with all his desire to be civil and even soothing, could not control the expression of his own satisfaction and triumph at the verification of all his prophecies with respect to the results of the marriage.

Moss, however, was yet in ignorance as regarded the real history of the Cat and Cauliflower, and the state of Mr. Apperton's family connections: he had once glanced at the subject in a conversation with Maxwell, and offered an opinion that his son-in-law's brains were turned by misfortune; in-

stancing his transient allusion to the sign of the alehouse at Ratcliffe Highway; but the surgeon was too much on his guard to give Godfrey one iota more of information than he already possessed, fully convinced that to a man of his turn of mind, the absurdity of the combination would be sufficient to make it matter of constant reference, if he were once in possession of the facts.

Charles Somerford, a few days after despatching his answer to Maxwell's friendly letter, left London for Cheltenham, in the company and under the advice of Mr. Macleod, who had, for the three previous months of his existence, done little else than talk of the delights and advantages of that popular watering place. If poor Charles could have foreseen the events which were to occur there, he might, perhaps, have faltered in his determination of taking this journey, and even have hesitated before he decided upon the impossibility of meeting his beloved Kate again.

Three days—three dreadful days — had the Maxwells passed at Brighton; and Apperton's letters gradually became shorter as the week advanced, until, on the fourth morning, his regular despatch did not arrive. This added greatly, as may naturally be imagined, to the restlessness and disquietude of the family; but Moss argued from the omission of writing, the certainty that the stock-brokering boy was coming, an argument which, strange as it may sound, was any thing but agreeable to Kate. Maxwell did not at all agree in the conclusion at which Moss had arrived, and seemed to anticipate something beyond their conception, unfortunate in his son-in-law's silence.

The time hung heavily on hand until dinner, at which the family had seated themselves, and Maxwell had suggested the necessity of arranging a journey, either for himself or Edward, to town the next morning, when a knock at the house door announced an arrival. All ears were open, all eyes directed to the entrance of the dinner parlour; Maxwell was sure it was Apperton; Moss, who firmly believed, though he did not openly say so, that Apperton had destroyed himself, thought it was some messenger to break bad news; Edward himself was agitated, and Kate's heart

beat at the rate of two hundred to the minute, because she, like her father, was convinced it was her husband; — the door opened, and the servant, advancing to Mr. Maxwell, whispered, somewhat audibly, that Mr. Biddle had arrived from London, who wished to speak to him.

The name of Biddle, unknown to any one of the party except Maxwell, embodied in itself such a mass of doubts, fears, and antipathies, that its very mention conjured up a host of feelings the most difficult to contend with.

"Where is he?" said Maxwell, "where is the gentleman?"

"I have shown him into the drawing room, sir," said the servant.

"I'll go to him directly, say," said the surgeon.

The servant went.

"Who 's your friend, Mack?" said Moss; "who 's Biddle?"

Kate, in the midst of her agitation, could scarcely stifle a laugh at the tone and manner in which Godfrey repeated the very strange patronymic of the new arrival.

"He is a clerk," said Maxwell, "I believe of Apperton's; I will go and hear what he has to say."

Maxwell left the room pale and trembling; for not only did the arrival of Mr. Biddle in the bosom of his family agitate him greatly, but he felt quite certain that something very serious had happened to Apperton himself, which induced him to despatch a special messenger to Brighton.

"Something's wrong," said Moss, after Maxwell was gone, and out of hearing; "Apperton would not have sent if he could have come."

"My dear Mr. Moss," said Kate, "what can have happened?"

"No matter, Kittums," said Moss; "you'll be no great loser whatever it is — eh — I'll have one more cut of that mutton, Neddums, grieving's a folly — laugh when you can — eat when you may."

"I wonder," said Kate, "if I might go up stairs, and ——"

"No, no," said Moss, "none of your up-stairs tricks; remember the night in London, when you chose to go up stairs, and found out papa at some of his tricks."

"Moss," said Edward, "let me entreat you spare all this just now. I am sure — certain in my own mind — that something terrible has happened, what I do not pretend to say; but rely upon it, no trifling matter would have brought this confidential person here."

A short time elapsed before Maxwell returned to the room: when he did, he appeared calm and composed, but cast down in sorrow; he was accompanied by Mr. Biddle, a vulgar, overdressed city dandy, with large whiskers, and black hedge-hog hair; the former of which ornaments were full of dust, collected in his journey outside the Regulator, or Magnet stage coach, whichever it might be. Maxwell presented him to the party, and asked him to take wine; an invitation which, having dined at Crawley, on his road, he accepted with a bow, and, grasping a decanter with a huge red hand, on one of the fingers of which, appeared a thick heavy ring, helped himself to a bumper of port.

Kate, although silence seemed the order of the day, and nobody felt at liberty to make any general enquiry, thought that she ought to ask after her husband, from whom Mr. Biddle had avowedly and notoriously come, and accordingly she begged the stranger to tell her how he left Mr. Apperton.

"Quite well, ma'am," said Biddle, "in health, but a good deal worried with business."

"When does he talk of coming down?" said Edward.

"Why," said Biddle, looking extremely foolish, "as to that, I ——"

"Oh, not this week, I dare say," said Maxwell, interrupting his guest.

"Any news in London?" said Moss.

"No good news, sir," said Biddle; "three or four extensive failures yesterday have thrown the city into great confusion. I never saw such times in my life."

A servant, at this juncture, entered the room to know what letters were to go to the post; bellmen in Brighton being unknown at the period to which I am now referring.

"Stay," said Maxwell, "I must write one or two more."

"And, William," said Kate, "there is one for Mrs. Dawes on my table, take that."

Mrs. Dawes was Maxwell's housekeeper in Burlington Gardens.

"I must not miss this post, for I want several things down from town, and I ——"

"You had better let it be," said Maxwell, "I ——"

"Yes, ma'am," said Biddle, "I think you had better let it be."

"I'll explain," said Maxwell, again interrupting his new friend. "I'll take care of your letter, Kate; perhaps I may go up to-morrow, or ——"

The mystery which seemed to envelope all the proceedings of the parties in London began to grow evident and disagreeable, and Moss could not refrain from whispering to her, "There is something wrong, depend on't."

Maxwell, having evinced various symptoms of mental uneasiness, rose from his chair, and announced that he was going up stairs to write for an hour, desiring Edward, as he quitted the table, to take care of Mr. Biddle; giving Biddle, at the same time, a hint, by signs, not to be too communicative on the subject of his visit, during his absence.

"Mr. Biddle," said Edward, "help yourself — and Apperton, I suppose, is a good deal harassed by these failures."

"Yes," said Biddle, "he is of a very speculative turn, you know, and has embarked every thing of his own, and, indeed, of many other people's, in these new concerns."

"But I suppose it will all come right at last," said Moss —"wind up well?"

"Why, I hope so," said the clerk; "at present it does not look quite so well as one might wish."

"But," said Kate, "Mr. Apperton is well in health?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Biddle, "very well in health."

"Ah!" said Moss, taking one of his largest pinches of snuff.

"Is he at Burlington Gardens?" said Edward.

"Why," said Biddle, "I really don't know where he is to-day; his mother was with him yesterday, and I think he promised to go to Ratcliffe Highway, if he could, to-day."

"His mother!" said Edward.

"Yes," said the clerk; "*his* mother and *my* mother, you know."

"What both?" said Kate.

"No," said Biddle; "they are the same person, but with two names."

"Ratcliffe Highway!" said Moss, half in joke, and half in earnest; "what is that the Cat and Cauliflower?"

"Yes," said Biddle, "the same."

Biddle took it for granted that the whole history of his connection was known by the Maxwells, and felt himself one of the family.

"The what, Mr. Moss?" said Kate.

"Cat and Cauliflower, Mrs. Apperton," said Godfrey, rubbing his chin, and smiling complacently; "why then the stockbrokering boy is not so mad as I took him to be, after all."

"You know," continued Biddle, "the old gentleman has bound me to silence about what has happened in town; but I can't say I see any good in secrecy — the thing must be known sooner or later; all your furniture in Burlington Gardens has been taken in execution, and the bailiffs are in the house at this minute."

The sudden and abrupt off-hand manner in which Biddle, grown familiar from the effects of the wine he had swallowed, announced this fact, regardless of Maxwell's injunctions, almost overcame poor Kate.

"What, sir!" said she, "bailiffs in our house — what does it mean?"

"Why," said Biddle, "the old gentleman up stairs has given bonds and judgments over and over again; and upon one of these for a good large sum, a greedy devil of a fellow, anxious to be first in at the death, has laid hold of the personals."

"I say, master Ned," said Moss, "who is right now?"

"But," said Edward, "my father has abundance of property to answer all demands upon him."

"My belief is," said Biddle, helping himself to a fifth bumper as he spoke, "that the old gentleman has not got a five-shilling piece left to bless himself with."

"Merciful Heaven, sir!" said Kate, "are you trifling with our feelings — or can this be true?"

"Oh, it is true enough," said Biddle — "true as

gospel; and what 's worse than that, I don't see how he is ever to recover a farthing: the kite system has been going on at a great rate, and so has the bolstering scheme, but neither will do any longer."

"Kites and bolsters," said Moss, "what jargon is that?"

"And is my father ruined?" said Kate, bursting into tears.

"Ruined is a strong term, ma'am," said Biddle; "I suppose he has got the use of his eyes and his hands; so if he just toddles over the water for a few weeks, he 'll come out white-washed, and may begin business again."

"Is this raillery, sir," said Edward, "or are you serious? because if the former, you carry the joke somewhat too far; and if the latter, your want of feeling and delicacy are beyond endurance:—do you recollect, sir, to whom you are addressing yourself?"

"To be sure, sir," said Biddle; "to the family of which my half-brother Apperton is one."

"Half-brother," murmured Kate, through her tears, who, although she certainly felt no enthusiastic affection for the stockbroker, held him in infinitely higher estimation than the clerk.

"Yes, ma'am, half-brother," said the clerk, colouring up, and looking at once angry and impudent, "as you know, ma'am; for my brother told me, only yesterday, he had explained the whole of our family connection; and I say I see no cause to be afraid of speaking out in the company of one's own relations, nor any reason why I, who am the lawful son of my mother, should stoop to John Apperton, who is not."

The amazement of the family group at this tirade kept them silent, even while Biddle continued,—

"And as for *that*, I say *now*, and I'll say it again, the honest landlord of the Cat and Cauliflower is a better man than the speculator who ruins himself, and every body round him, by building castles in the air."

The situation of poor Kate at the end of this speech, may be better conceived than described. The impulse by which Edward was affected would have induced him to expel his new connection in a summary manner; but Moss, who knew that there was something true, as well as im-

portant, in the mystic sign of the Cat and Cauliflower, endeavoured to soothe the lady, while he extracted a few more historical facts from Biddle; but his efforts were frustrated by the entrance of Maxwell himself, who instantly perceived, by the appearance of the party, that something unpleasant had happened.

"What is the meaning of this?" said Maxwell: "what has occurred — Kate, in tears?"

"Why, sir," said Edward, "this person has been pleased, under the influence of wine, I conclude, to exhibit so much insolence and ill-breeding, and to declare our present state in such coarse and unfeeling terms, that I——"

"You need not make a speech, Mr. Maxwell," said Biddle; "I know you are a mighty proud set, and Apperton knows it too; but proud as you are, your pride has had a fall; and I verily believe, if it had not been for the persuasion of your father, my brother-in-law would have been as good a man as any of you."

"Sir," said Maxwell, in a voice of mingled rage and grief, "you forget yourself — your business was simply with *me* — you were sent here as the clerk of your employer — I wished to treat you kindly and civilly, but I warned you not to allude to business — the sooner you quit my house the better."

"*Your* house, sir," said Biddle; "if it was your house, you dare not stay in it — nor would you have a chair to sit on, or a bed to lie in — but I require no second bidding, sir, to go out of your — ready furnished lodging, sir."

"Kate, my love, leave the room," said Maxwell; "Edward, take care of your sister."

"Oh, I dare say I am not fit company for her," said Biddle: "recollect, however, she is my brother's wife — yes, the wife of the brother who has risked every thing to keep you out of prison at this very moment — don't stir, ma'am, I am going — you may stop where you are — I shall return to London to-night, and give John a faithful history of my reception, and we will see, before four-and-twenty hours are over our heads, whether he will submit to be made the tool of a set of proud upstarts, who haven't a guinea in the world to bless themselves with."

Saying which, the barbarian saved Edward the dis-

agreeable task of kicking him out of the room, by making a retreat, which he did without taking the slightest notice of any one of the party.

"I say, Mack," said Moss, when the monster was well out of hearing, "this is all very pretty, but what the deuce does it mean?"

"Why," said Maxwell, "it means, Moss, that I am utterly undone by the failure of Apperton's schemes for my enrichment; and it follows, that I am doomed to be trampled upon by his relations."

"And is that man a relation of *his?*" said Kate.

"You must know all in time," said Maxwell: "I have been blinded, duped, deceived, and you have been betrayed; but this is not the moment to recount all my miseries; a day's reprieve is only granted me. This very night I must fly the country, which I thought never to have left. Apperton's arrangements are made: he thinks things, perhaps, may be accommodated to a certain extent; but not if I am once arrested. The house and furniture in London are gone. There are judgments against me for upwards of thirty thousand pounds; and they are not to be resisted. To-morrow will be Sunday; that alone gives me four-and-twenty hours' breathing time, a period not likely to be extended, especially after this squabble with his vulgar brother-in-law."

"But where can we go?" said Edward.

"You need not go with me," said Maxwell.

"*I will,*" said Kate, "to the very farthest end of the world."

"Your husband will claim your society here," said Maxwell.

"My father demands my care," said Kate.

"And the stockbroker," said Moss, "can find plenty of solace and society at the Cat and Cauliflower. Oh! Mack! Mack! what have I said of that wooden-headed cretur?—what did I foretell?"

"It serves no purpose," said the surgeon, "to recur to what is past—what is done cannot be undone."

"For my part," said Moss, who could not resist joking in the worst of times, "I believe you have been done, and undone too, by him."

"Upon one thing I am resolved," said Kate; "no power shall induce me to quit my father."

"Unless," said Edward, "your husband insists upon your staying."

"That is arranged," said Maxwell; "since Kate has thus nobly expressed her determination, I will set her heart at rest on that point. Apperton has directed our course, and made arrangements accordingly. Madeira is the place of our destination; thither he advises me to take Kate; thither he will certainly follow us; and thither I particularly desire to go, from having a friend there, upon whose kindness I can rely."

"What a strange thing," said Moss, "is the human mind! Here you are at sixty, or whatever it is, ruined and without a shilling in the world, calmly talking of rooting yourself out of your native soil, and crossing the Bay of Biscay, as if it were the result you had expected to your fine speculations."

"My dear Moss," said Maxwell, "I place my trust in Providence, and meet the evils of this world with faith and hope; what has happened is the fruit of a worldly ambition. I wished to give that poor fellow there a better fortune than I could otherwise have done."

"And that poor fellow," said Edward, running to his father's arms, "will follow *your* fortunes wherever they lead you."

"Moss," said Maxwell, "I suppose we part with you to-morrow, perhaps for ever?"

"Yes, Maxwell," said Godfrey, "I am no sailor — you'll abandon me, lamenting on the shore, like an old hen, who sees her brood of ducks swim over the pond, and leave her on the bank."

"You will sometimes think of us," said Kate.

"I think I shall, Katherine," said Godfrey; "but as yet I haven't had time to think about it, the blow has fallen so suddenly — 'tis but a dream — I cannot fancy myself awake — I don't believe it real."

"We have no time for thinking," said Maxwell, "we must act; and it is a great blessing that, in all cases of emergency, it is necessary to exert our energies to meet the

difficulty, which prevents the mind from inertly dwelling upon its miseries."

"The subject that principally occupies my mind at this moment," said Edward, "is the insolence of that fellow. What does he call himself — Biddle? I never ——"

"Stifle that resentment," said Maxwell; "we shall have leisure to talk over *his* insolence, when we are beyond the reach of his malice. The pride of little minds sometimes leads to the commission of the deadliest injuries; and if we had not the sacred day of rest to-morrow, which the law itself may not violate, I should feel more uneasy at the apprehension of what that man's injured dignity might induce him to commit, than any greater evil."

"But the servants," said Kate, "in London?"

"They are dismissed," said Maxwell, "with the exception of Dawes, who, being permitted to carry with her all your articles of dress and personal property, will meet us at Portsmouth, for which place, early to-morrow, we must start, so as to be on board the vessel pointed out by Apperton, before Monday morning, when she sails."

"We shall have but a short sea stock of clothes," said Edward.

"What matters that?" said Moss, "one shirt will do; you won't be more than a fortnight getting to Madeira, and who is to see you on board ship?"

"My mind is made up to any thing," said Kate, "now that I am not to be separated from my father," — and her thoughts glanced at the moment to Somerford, in which mingled a desire, at the last hour, to write one brief letter to him. She was now about to be so decidedly parted from him, so eternally alienated from him in this world, that the most scrupulous judge in existence could not have decided against the impulse which she felt. Selfishness was a crime of which her heart was innocent, and she wished to stifle the desire she felt, until she had an opportunity of consulting her father, without whose sanction she determined not to gratify it.

"Well!" said Moss, as if catching the connection of her thoughts, "I only wish one thing — that Charles Somerford had married Katherine, and that the stockbroker had been hanged before you knew him."

Maxwell entreated his friend, on the last evening they were to pass together, perhaps for ever, not to rake up old grievances, especially as it was absolutely necessary to collect their spirits, and make their arrangements for the morrow; and, by any body but Godfrey Moss, such a request would have scarcely been required. Here was the respectable, excellent Maxwell, who for years had been looked up to and esteemed by a numerous circle of society, beggared and driven into exile by one of the most sudden blows that can fall, having always in his mind the reflection, that he himself had caused the overthrow of his fortune, and the destruction of his child's happiness, by a blind adherence to the romantic expedients of an ignorant, unlettered man, himself the dupe of greater capitalists, who, having secured their own property, lived upon the wretched victims of their vice, and, strong in their resources, even ridiculed those whom they had first inveigled and destroyed.

The evening passed wretchedly: the wind whistled along the cliffs, and shook the fragile windows of the house; and Kate, who, like all uninitiated people, deduce from the fact of there being a breeze in any particular part of England, the dreadful certainty of a gale of wind affecting their friends in the Pacific or Atlantic, shuddered at the perils they were destined so soon to brave, when exposed to the power of the warring elements next day.

Strange it is, but true, though not complimentary to Apperton, that, in the midst of all her regrets, she never lamented her husband's absence. In their short intercourse as man and wife, selfishness had so distinctly characterised his disposition, that she felt relieved rather than pained by his absence. It might have been that her feelings would not have taken a tone so decided, if Somerford had not so inopportunely arrived; but when she once beheld *him*, all the rules which she had laid down for her conduct, all the resolutions she had made as to the regulation of her mind, and the mode of passing her life, were put to flight; and to this change a decided disaffection, I might almost say hatred, of Apperton, succeeded. It is, perhaps, only a woman of strong feelings and sensitive mind, who can appreciate such a sentiment, or understand such a feeling as

I wish to express — the very kindnesses of Apperton were repulsive, and the slightest marks of his affection hateful.

Edward had quitted the house, to breathe, perhaps for the last time, his native air; and Moss had gone to visit his smoking friend upon the Steyne, in order to ascertain whether he could give him what he called a "beddums" when Maxwell was gone, and Kate and her father were left alone. It was then that Maxwell explained to her the various allusions to the public house at Ratcliffe Highway, and the mingled families of Apperton and Biddle. Then it was that tears chased each other down his furrowed cheeks, as he implored her forgiveness for having caused the ruin of her hopes. Then it was he related to her the true reason of his disinclination to the match with Somerford, and then confessed that her fortune, which ought to have been secured to her, and placed her above the powers of fate, had been all swallowed up in the general ruin.

Oh! it was a grievous sight to see the grey-headed old man imploring his daughter's pardon — it was a dreadful wreck of all his proud ambitious hopes, to find himself the ruined father of a beggared family, actually at the mercy of his son-in-law even for common subsistence; but then it was cheering to behold the affectionate Kate drying her father's tears, and imploring him to be calm and composed, and place his trust in Heaven — from the bottom of her heart *she* forgave him all, and would devote her life to prove her duty and affection towards him; all she asked was leave to write her last farewell to Charles. "No word of love shall mingle in my sad adieu," said Kate; "it is banished from my heart for ever; but to redeem my character, to vindicate myself from the imputation of fickleness and falsehood, to breathe the purest wishes for his happiness, is all I ask."

"It must not be, my child," said Maxwell: "our situation is so perilous, that a clue once given by such a letter might be destruction; at present, although my embarrassments are fatal, they are unknown publicly. If you, in your address to Somerford, hint at the probably eternal separation between you, it will lead, perhaps, to some enquiry, some explanation, the consequences of which might

be ruinous; write to him when we are safe, from our asylum, wherever it may be. In the island to which Apperton has recommended us to go, there is a man, a merchant of some eminence, who owes me a debt of gratitude; there we shall be at all events secure from the storm of failures, and there you can address yourself to Charles."

Kate was, of course, compelled to submit to circumstances, and forego the desire nearest her heart; but having obtained her father's consent to write eventually, it served her as something to look forward to, on the stormy horizon by which they were surrounded, she little dreaming of the events by which her after life were to be affected. It was, however, something to have achieved; and she felt pleased that she had opened her heart, and that her wish had not been deemed improper.

But when she began to reflect upon the connection into which she had been so unhappily forced, all the pecuniary consequences to her father, brother, and herself, seemed light by comparison with her indissoluble tie to the family of her husband. Kate was not proud; but when she considered, reduced as she was in fortune, and linked as she was to a husband also ruined in his circumstances, what her situation must be if she lost (as, in the ordinary course of nature, she might be presumed at no very grest distance of time to do,) her beloved father, she could not but tremble; she would sink into the connection, and perhaps compulsorily become the associate of the Biddle family, who, from the specimen she had seen exhibited, she anticipated might consider themselves conferring a high favour in granting her their protection.

She had two maiden aunts in the north of Scotland, both older than her father, and both, it was more than probable, deriving their income from his professional exertions. To them she could scarcely look with any thing like hope; and Edward, her next natural protector after her husband, was, by the circumstances which involved his family, thrown out of the channel of his profession, at all events for a time. Never, indeed, did ruin more sudden, or more complete, fall upon a devoted family: the mere recapitulation of their distresses seemed like a reproof to her parent; and

the unfortunate Katherine, still hoping, prayed that he might be spared the miseries of actual want, and that whenever death closed his troubled career, she, too, might end her days.

Moss and Edward returned to the house nearly together; and Moss, who, with all his *brusquerie* and bluntness, had a kind heart, gave the most decisive proof of the state of his feelings, by letting ten o'clock go by, without whispering the word supper, although his dinner had been somewhat abbreviated by the arrival of Apperton's clerk.

He, however, was not forgotten; and never, in Maxwell's house, had that meal been put down under such trying circumstances. It was the last time, perhaps, they should ever be assembled round the same table—it was the last repast they should take together; nay, to the Maxwells it was the last night, perhaps, they should ever pass in England. Nothing alleviated the weight of their sorrow, but the suddenness of its arrival, and the imperious necessity for exertion; and of all the party who braved the storm, Kate was the firmest: cleaving to her father, she felt she derived new strength; without him, like the ivy torn from the oak, she would have sunk to the earth, and have been trampled on; but, twined round the parent stem, she seemed to gain new strength and freshness by the difficulties which threatened them; at least, such was her strength of mind, that if some woman's fears assailed her, she overcame them, and set a good example to her comrades in distress, of bearing up against inevitable misfortune. There are points and incidents in our lives, trivial in themselves, but which affect us more than mightier events; and it was not until the moment of separation for the night, that Maxwell appeared to sink under his calamities; it was a separation so dissimilar to the hundreds of partings which had preceded it, when the events of the following day would bring the friends and companions together again; to-night, for the last time, they slept under the same roof, and all after to-night was blank, vague, dark, and uncertain.

It was a fortunate circumstance amongst the distressing ones, that the Maxwells had left their house — their usual place of residence—before it was seized upon. Kate, as

she pressed her solitary pillow, could not but think of the hours she had passed in her favourite *boudoir*, now pulled to pieces by the hands of merciless creditors — stripped of its well-known furniture, ultimately to be sold to any buyer who might offer. It appeared that Apperton had made all the necessary arrangements with respect to the property exempted from the effects of the execution; but his selections had not been guided by taste or feeling; he saw no charms in a favourite picture, nor associated any pleasing ideas with familiar objects, in the shape of plate or furniture; he secured what the law permitted him to save; he put that portion of their valuables under the care of Mrs. Dawes, who for many years had acted in the capacity of assistant housekeeper to Katherine. She, poor body, was too infirm and too old to follow the fortunes of the family farther than the coast; but whither she had Apperton's directions to proceed, to meet her master and young mistress.

The clock struck twelve before the members of the once happy family separated; it was a scene not to be described — little was spoken, but the heart of each was full, and heavy — each after its fashion. Of all, Maxwell felt the deepest sorrow; the others wept for the ruin of the house, but Maxwell wept doubly, for that he had been the cause of it. And so they parted.

CHAPTER IX.

Beneath the trembling main the sky was clear,
And wing'd our course with slender airs, we sail'd,
Till straight, as evening fell, the fluttering gale,
Increasing gradual from the red north-east,
Blew stiff and fierce; at last the tempest howl'd.
Next morning nought but angry seas and skies
Appeared, conflicting round. Meantime, right on,
Our strong-ribbed vessel drove before the blast,
That falling something of its fury, gave us
A quick auspicious voyage. THOMSON.

JUST as the Maxwells were stepping into the carriage which was to convey them to Portsmouth, Somerford was stepping into the Cheltenham stage-coach, perfectly unconscious of

the ruin of the family from which he had been so cruelly excluded; and although the young soldier was free from the trammels of debt and difficulties, his heart was not with him. Still, still it lingered at Brighton; and he felt that every mile the foaming horses dragged him westward, he was so much further from the only place in the world at which he wished to be. But he had obeyed the dictates of honour; and, even if he had wavered in his good resolution, he could not now retrace the course he had pursued.

It was early when the Maxwells quitted their residence; the morning was fine, the air fresh, the sky clear, and the very circumstance of moving and changing the scene was something desirable. With what different feelings had Kate, before now, left Brighton! and yet all her fortitude was summoned to support her father. They waited only for their letters. Apperton had forwarded another remittance to Maxwell, and a new and more explicit code of instructions. In short, from the clear and perspicuous manner in which the whole programme was arranged, it appeared to Maxwell that the expectation, on his part, of their being obliged to emigrate was not of a very recent date. All thoughts of past events were useless, and he resolved to obey his son-in-law's instructions. Godfrey took an affectionate leave of them, and the family party, with Mrs. Alsop and Maxwell's man on the dicky, found themselves rolling along towards Worthing, at a very little after ten o'clock.

Their progress to Portsmouth was not interrupted by any accident, although Kate's heart sometimes swelled, as she saw the happy and well-dressed inhabitants of the villages through which they passed, going to and returning from church; while in others, the open doors of the clean cottages, at which were seated the contented labourer, surrounded by his laughing children, displayed all the comforts of humble life, and exhibited a striking lesson to those who, possessing ample means, and an almost splendid income, go the length of risking all they have, in order to obtain more than they want.

It was not to be expected that the journey would be any

thing but a wretched and unhappy one. The separation of a family in a few hours — the scattering them on the surface of the waters — the *éclat* which the circumstances, when they became known, would occasion — in short, silence seemed the order of the day, and each of the travellers was occupied with thinking, according to his different views and feelings, of the probable results of the expedition.

It was about half-past four o'clock in the afternoon when they reached Portsmouth, and were driven to the George Inn, where they were received by Mrs. Dawes, who had been there since the night before, waiting their arrival. She burst into tears at the sight of her ancient master and his downcast daughter, whose surprise was considerably excited, when she heard her father enquire if the house at Ryde was ready for their reception.

The housekeeper answered in the affirmative; and it became a question of whether they should take some refreshment, or proceed directly to the water-side, where, they were informed, a boat was ready to take them across as soon as they arrived. The simplicity of manner with which Mrs. Dawes acted her part in this strange drama quite deceived Mrs. Apperton; who began to cling to the hope that the whole affair had been magnified, and that merely a short seclusion in the beautiful Isle of Wight would supersede the necessity of a voyage to an island still more beautiful, it is true, but with which she associated nothing of home — nothing of that country which held her husband and — Somerford.

Maxwell, however, decided for starting immediately, so that the carriage might go down to the square in front of the Quebec Tavern, off which the steam-packet was lying, and the luggage be forthwith transferred to the vessel. Mrs. Dawes, to whom, as it appeared, all the arrangement of this underplot had been consigned, gave her master to understand that she had not delayed her business, nor been idle during the day; for that all the articles with which she had been charged were safe in the house, and ready for their use. She then gave Maxwell a list of those articles, and where he would find them; and handed to Kate some

bundles of letters and private papers, which she had saved out of the wreck in London.

Things being so far arranged, to Mrs. Apperton's perfect amazement, she found herself handed out of the carriage into the boat, and thence to the packet. Maxwell having given the post-boys directions to take the chariot back to the George, and let it remain there until further orders; such being the tenor of his instructions from Apperton. Edward followed his sister into the boat mechanically, not in the least comprehending the course which his father was pursuing, but doing exactly as he was bid, without question or comment.

On the edge of the water, the faithful Dawes took her leave and returned to the inn, where she was to sleep, and whence, on the following day, she was to prosecute her journey to London. Alsop and the man-servant remaining with the family, but as yet entirely unconscious of their destination, and fondly believing that some sudden whim had seized their master, and that he had resolved off-hand to change the sun and dust of Brighton for the shade and verdure of the Isle of Wight.

Once on board the steamer, no time was lost in getting her under way — the water bubbled, the pistons worked, the chimney smoked, and the paddles splashed, and Kate, who had never before ventured her fair person in a similar vessel, felt interested and excited by the motion and the progress they made, still hoping that the Isle of Wight was to be the end of their voyage, but yet obeying the injunction of her father to ask no questions, and to make no observations touching their own proceedings in the presence of any body else. Three-quarters of an hour terminated their *trajet*, and they found themselves, within sixty minutes of leaving Portsmouth, seated in the Bugle Inn at Ryde, waiting for the coming out of a sociable and pair, in and about which they were all to betake themselves to Cowes.

When Kate heard this order given, and saw the luggage again packed into another carriage, her heart failed her, and she lost sight of the one bright spark of hope with which she had hitherto solaced herself. It was clear there was no house at Ryde; it was, therefore, most probable there would be no house at Cowes prepared for their recep-

tion. However, all she had to do was to agree with every body, and follow the stream. The sociable appeared; the drivers were mounted; the passengers stowed; and away went the fugitives amidst the bows of master, mistress, waiters, and chambermaids.

Along that beautifully undulating road to Wooton did the carriage roll; and at any other period, with what rapture would Kate have gazed on the varying scenery through which they passed; but whatever their feelings might be during the present part of the journey, it was requisite to keep perfect silence as to its object, since it had been found necessary to pack up Mrs. Alsop in the inside of the vehicle. In due course of time, they reached and drove through Newport, and turned off to the seaport, where the house was situated to which they were going. Four miles more of sweet country, just in the dusk of a spring evening, brought them to Cowes, where they suddenly stopped at the door of the Vine Inn; and where, as was the case at Portsmouth, it appeared they were expected; for a man, in a sailor's dress, stepped from the doorway to open the carriage, and touching his hat to Maxwell, made him at once comprehend that *he* was the person to be spoken to on business.

Venus, the daughter of the roseate hostess, speedily ushered the mystified Kate and her brother into a comfortable room, facing the harbour; and there it was agreed that they should dine, it being now nearly seven o'clock. What was to occur afterwards, the younger branches of the family could only surmise. One thing alone seemed certain, that they were destined to sleep on board the vessel which was to convey them to their destination.

The repast was speedily prepared: it was none of the finest, nor were the appetites of the parties calculated for its enjoyment, even if it had been; for sorrow filled their hearts, and the contemplation of the void before them occupied their thoughts.

It was nearly nine o'clock when the same man who had opened the carriage for them entered the room where they were sitting, after having respectfully tapped at the door.

"The boat's ready, sir," said he to Maxwell.

"The luggage ——"

"Is on board, sir," replied the man — "all but the young woman's — the young lady's maid — she won't part with her boxes and things?"

"Why?" said Maxwell.

"I don't know, sir," said the man; "she is crying below stairs, and says she can't go to foreign parts."

"Send her here," said Maxwell; "we shall be ready in ten minutes ourselves."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the man, and retired.

"Is this," said Maxwell, "your faithful maid, Kate, who hesitates to accompany you on your voyage?"

"Poor girl!" said Kate, "it is not very surprising. She has no object to gain by going, and she gives up all her friends, connections, home——"

"She travels," said Maxwell; "and what can a person in her situation do better? However, the thing is unimportant, except as you may be inconvenienced. Give her her wages, and dismiss her. Williams can pay her; but I suppose you will like to bid her good-by, after six or seven years' knowledge of her. I'll send for her."

Saying which, Maxwell rang the bell, and directed the waiter to send his servant Williams to him.

"Well," said Edward, "I *do* think, Kate, considering the exalted opinion you had of Mrs. Alsop's affection for you, she has not turned out quite so devoted as might have been expected."

"Those of this world are worldly, Ned," said Maxwell; "we must not look for miracles: — Williams," continued the surgeon, addressing his man, who had entered the room, "I find that Mrs. Apperton's maid declines accompanying her mistress on our little excursion."

"Yes, sir," said Williams, "she does; she says she is not used to the sea, and knows nothing of foreign parts, and prefers staying at home; and as she was not engaged to travel abroad, she would rather not."

"Well, then, she must follow her own inclinations," said Maxwell: "you may tell her, that her mistress will speak to her, and then, when her business is settled, you will collect the cloaks and coats, and we must go on board."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Williams: — "I am very

sorry to say what I am going to say—but I really cannot go with you. You did not tell either Mrs. Alsop or me what was going to happen, and, for all we knew, we were only coming here to stay."

"What, Williams, and do you leave me too?" said Maxwell.

"Why, sir," said Williams, "I am very sorry,—I have been with you many years, but—I—have an objection to travel—and Mrs. Alsop, sir—and—I——"

"Oh, agree upon that point," said Maxwell.

"Why yes, sir," said Williams, looking rather foolish; "Mrs. Alsop, sir, as you call her, of course guides me, seeing that she is my wife, sir."

"Married!" said Kate.

"Yes, ma'am," said Williams, "we have been married more than five months; and so as *she* won't go, I can't well leave her; and we mean to stop in England and try to better ourselves. We have been in service a long while, and——"

"Better yourselves!" said Maxwell; "by what means can persons better themselves, who have to pay neither for rent nor for taxes, nor for food nor for clothing, and who have a certain income to receive?"

"Why, sir," said Williams, "that's very true; but the same thing may be said of the niggers in the West Hingies, who are rather better off than we; but still, after working for others, for a long time, it's agreed to set up for one's self."

"And pray," said Kate, curious to ascertain what particular vocation her maid and her maid's husband had chosen, in order to realise a fortune, "what business do you propose to follow?"

"Why, ma'am," said Williams, "I have been in treaty for a public-house down by Ratcliffe Highway; and now you are all going to leave England, I think I shall strike the bargain."

The words were magical—Kate coloured crimson; her father turned pale—it might be—it was not probable—but it was just possible, that the snug retirement of their seceding servants was the Cat and Cauliflower; the family

mansion of the Biddles and Appertons—the bare mention of the trade and situation put a stop to all further questions.

"Well, well," said Maxwell, "of course you must follow your own inclinations: circumstances prevented my explaining that I was about to leave the country, so that I have only myself to blame for being left without servants. —Come, Kate, we must be going—if you wish to see Alsop, go and bid her farewell; the boat is ready, and we must not keep it waiting."

Kate proceeded to take leave of her *faithful* handmaid, and Williams, having rendered a due account of the monies intrusted to his care, was paid the joint wages of himself and his wife; and the Maxwells, having walked down to the steps on the Parade, embarked by moonlight in the boat for the vessel which was destined to bear them to scenes of new interests, new sorrows, and new adventures.

The effect produced upon Edward by the sudden change in the circumstances of his family was most extraordinary —he murmured not—he spoke not—he sat or moved in silence, implictly obeying the slightest wish of his father —he seemed to have sunk into a despondency, from which nothing could rouse him: he fancied himself doomed to a life of poverty and misery, and to have lost the power even of struggling with misfortune. On the subject of his Maria, to the recollection of whom he clung with pure devotedness, he dared not speak to his father, oppressed as he saw him by sorrows of his own; and if he had violated his parent's command never to allude to that subject again, what object was there to be gained? he was told a connection with her would be destruction; and all that seemed like hope about the affair was derivable from the alteration in his own circumstances, which might, by lowering him in the scale of society, obviate some of the objections which his father had declared to exist to a continuation of their cquaintance previous to his fall.

As for Moss, he was left helpless at Brighton; taken far from his London haunts, and still farther from his Lincolnshire pursuits, he knew not what to do; he affected to joke at the surgeon's being obliged to *cut* and run, but he was deeply and seriously affected by his friend's misfortunes; it was a sort of break up, that unsettled and

unhinged him: and he twaddled about Brighton, because he could not exert himself, to leave it until the end of the week, in the beginning of which, they took their departure.

But to return to our poor friends themselves. The evening was mild and moderate, and after half an hour's pulling through a calm sea, they reached the brig which was to convey them to Madeira. On boarding her, the same well regulated arrangements appeared to have been made, and every body was prepared to receive the party. When Kate, however, discovered that she was the only female on board, the ingratitude of Mrs. Williams, *ci-devant* Alsop, struck her forcibly—if ingratitude that feeling can be called, which induces a woman to prefer her native country, and the society of her husband, to a perilous voyage and an unknown land.

Conceive the embarrassment of poor Kate—an embarrassment rendered more grievous from the suddenness of the transition from a comfortable, not to say luxurious, home, where every want and wish had been anticipated.

The difficulty, however, about female attendance might be overcome. One of the crew, a Cowes man, would be glad enough that his "old wumman," as he called his wife, should accompany him on the voyage, and act as servant to the young lady; but then she could not get on board until the morning: she had to pack up her things, and dispose of her little cottage, and get some body to take care of her furniture. Still it seemed so impossible to Katherine that she could endure the duties of housemaid to be performed by a red-headed boy in a hairy cap, tarred canvass trowsers, and a particularly dirty blue jacket, that the delay to her appeared nothing, compared with the escape from perpetual misery and inconvenience.

Maxwell had other feelings on the subject, which he could not exactly declare; and without doing so, he could hardly oppose his daughter's desire for an accommodation which decency, not to say comfort, seemed imperatively to demand—his dread was of the detention of the vessel while within reach of the laws of England; he had a confused idea of "*ne exeats*," and, moreover, a fear of that little implement, which, though fashioned as if for acce-

lerating a voyage, has not unfrequently put an end to one; namely, the "silver oar," by virtue of which, the anxious refugee from his country, on suspicion of debt, may be brought back and lodged in safe custody, to be baited by his creditors at large. The surgeon resolved, however, to stifle all selfish alarms, and run any personal hazard, rather than expose his poor child to the misery she so naturally anticipated.

Accordingly he requested the master of the brig to let his boat take the Cowes Benedict on shore, in order that it might bring off his Beatrice and her bundles as soon as possible; and then it was that he became convinced, that the man who commanded the vessel was perfectly aware of his motives to the voyage, and the peculiar delicacy of his situation. He, of himself, suggested to Maxwell the necessity of getting up his anchor at daylight, and standing on and off the harbour. "Because," said he, "when we are once adrift, if any of these land sharks should come out after us, why we can up helm and away; then neither crocodile nor alligator can catch us."

"How do you mean?" said Maxwell.

"Why, I mean this," replied the sailor; "I look upon counsellors and attorneys just as I look upon alligators and crocodiles; they are of the same genus, but only a different species, and I hate them. I was once ruined by law myself, and I'll run all hazards before any of the Does or Roes set foot on board my craft. John Apperton and I are not new friends, Mr. Maxwell; if we were, I should not have been freighted with you; so confidence is every thing — and now we understand one another."

It is impossible to describe the force of the shock which a man of delicate feelings and gentlemanly habits receives in the first advance, of even a well meaning inferior, who lets him understand that he is in the secret of his difficulties, and proffers his assistance and confidence as to the best mode of meeting them. Maxwell felt degraded, debased, lost. His pride and his ambition, as Mr. Biddle said, had, indeed, a fall. He had been recommended to the protection of a man who was the master of a little merchant brig, in order to ensure whose favour and care, the

knowledge of his ruin and misfortunes had preceded him. Nobody can comprehend the shuddering sensation which affected Maxwell when he made this discovery. He began, however, to believe, either that Apperton had been much longer anticipating the evil result of his speculations, and had prepared the present means of escape some considerable time previous, or that the gentlemen of the Stock Exchange maintained a sort of subscription yacht, ready, at a moment's notice, to carry them out of the reach of danger and difficulty. He knew that one of the greatest of the profession did keep a vessel to himself; and what he had just seen led him to imagine it not impossible that the smaller fry supported a joint stock brig for speculative expeditions.

"I don't think it would do," continued Hilton (such was the captain's name), "for your daughter to sail with us without a woman, seeing she has been used to it, and therefore we'll contrive to get one for her; but to say truth, I was not prepared for her coming."

"Did not Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell, "mention her?"

"No," said Hilton, "he seemed to think she would stay behind; but, however, she is better where she is. He is too deep in the mire ever to get out; of *that* I am sure; and he would only have left her in the mud if she had staid. We were to have gone to Lisbon," added he, "but he tells me you prefer Madeira, because you know somebody there, and you are right. Madeira is a fine island: there you'll have good English society, a healthy climate, and a short run home when you are able to return; and too happy shall I be to bring you back again, if it may ever be."

It was to be gathered from this conversation, that Apperton had thought it possible Kate would remain: it was clear from his conduct, and the short hurried notes he had written to her during his absence, and from his not having written at all, when the necessity of flight was announced, that he did not particularly wish it; but it might have been, that his half-brother, Biddle, had been charged with some communication when he went to Brighton, which the

unexpected and stormy termination of his visit to the family circle might have checked. At all events, Kate had now made her decision, and was safe from the vicissitudes of life in London, and secure with her father, to whom, in spite of his admitted, yet perhaps well-meant, duplicity with respect to Charles, she remained, as we have already seen, a true, faithful, and affectionate daughter.

When poor Kate, unattended and alone, huddled herself for the the night into a standing bed-place in her little cabin, and heard the water ripple by the side of her head as she rested it on a board-like pillow, her thoughts reverted to Charles; and, unused to nautical matters as she was, she reconciled herself to her own miserable position on board a small merchant brig, by comparing her sorrows with those which she fancied he must have suffered in an East Indiaman of twelve hundred tons, in which, if there had been water enough, Cleopatra herself might have been happy to navigate the Cydnus.

Edward "turned in" in silence, and with a heart loaded with sorrow; yet, like his sister, he resolved to sacrifice every thing to his duty, and determined, when once the voyage began, to look at every thing on its bright side, and live on in hopes of better days.

The morning dawned, and the anchor was weighed. Hilton was on deck watching the progress of the jolly-boat pulling ashore. The sun shone, and the wind was favourable for their starting. Hilton calculated that until the arrival of the mail from Southampton they were safe, as to pursuit; for although there was no post on the Monday, if any person had come down in pursuit of Maxwell, it would have been during the night; and he resolved, if they were detained until the steamer made her appearance, that he would near her, so as to command her deck with his glass, having, as he said to Maxwell, a sort of intuitive knowledge of the class of persons whose arrival he thought might be looked for; for it was clear that the ruin of Maxwell would very speedily be known in London, and that a chase for precedence of payment would most probably take place, by securing his person, however fruitless the struggle might eventually prove.

Maxwell's anxiety was awakened with the break of day. Full of undefinable apprehension, he watched with intense anxiety the numerous boats which left the shore, yet anxious to conceal, if possible, from Kate, that she was the innocent cause of his agitation. Still the brig stood on and off. Breakfast was served; the black coffee-pot, the japanned sugar-basin, the cracked tea-cups, and the metal spoons, the scant table-cloth, scarcely hiding the green baize it was stretched to cover, all became objects of curiosity and remark to Edward and his sister. Soft bread and bad butter, with a delicate dish of pig's fry, and three or four yellow shelled eggs, were added to the repast, of which, seeing that Hilton did the honours with warmth and hospitality, if not with grace and elegance, the young sailors partook with a forced show of appetite. Maxwell alone sat restlessly, and every now and then would step up the companion to look out for the expected enemy.

At length, after another tack, the iron mast and pendant of smoke of the Southampton steamer hove in sight, and seemed to fly along the land beyond the point of Calshot. The word was given to near her, according to the former proposition of Hilton, in order that he might rake her with his glass.

Kate was no sooner made acquainted with the object of this manœuvre, than she felt a thousand fears, lest — what! must I confess it? — lest Apperton, aware of all their proceedings, should follow and overtake them, and either force her to remain behind, or else become a partner of their flight; she instinctively, as it were, followed her father to the taffril, where, as the steamer rounded the corner of the Southampton Water, Hilton could command her. She listened while the captain scanned the passengers as they stood grouped, pointing out the beauties of the coast which they were rapidly approaching.

"I don't know any of them," said Hilton, aside to Maxwell; "there are two queerish looking fellows — there, d'ye see?" continued he, directing the glass in Maxwell's hand, "that man with the brown great coat and the yellow silk handkerchief, and the gentlemanly-looking fellow alongside of him. You don't know him?"

Maxwell looked, and denied the acquaintance.

"Ah, no fear, I think," said Hilton; "I expect our jolly-boat will be ready to put off, by the time we have stood in shore this tack, and then I defy the best of them, with this wind, to catch me in time to be troublesome."

"What!" said Kate, catching up the last words of the sentence, "is there any apprehension of pursuit?"

"Why, yes," said Hilton, "they may pursue us, but they won't catch us."

"And have we been delayed," said Kate, "and my father's safety endangered, for my accommodation and convenience?"

"No, my child," said Maxwell: "it was absolutely impossible that you should have made the voyage unattended by a female. There is no danger — there will be no difficulty — all will be well."

"I trust so," said Kate.

Hilton now turned his glass towards the shore; but still no boat was to be seen approaching them, and he began to manifest some symptoms of impatience, which, in her state, alarmed poor Katherine. Hilton, however, was only grumbling at losing a fair wind, and at the remote possibility of the fellows having got drunk ashore, and swamped the boat; while Maxwell, although concealing his nervousness as much as possible from his daughter, was unable to rally from the effects of a fear, the cause of which he scarcely knew.

It was now past eleven o'clock; the steamer had reached her moorings; the horn had sounded her arrival; and the bright sun beamed over the lovely island, when a boat became visible. In a few minutes more, it was recognised as the long-wished-for jolly-boat; the glass brought it near enough to present to Hilton's view the sailors, the expected woman, and a strange man! He sat muffled up in a boat-cloak, and his face was concealed. Maxwell was informed of the appearance of the unlooked-for, yet scarcely unexpected, visiter.

"What's to be done," said Maxwell, "if this man should have the power to stop me?"

"He!" said Hilton; "one man stop us; and he, too,

coming in my boat? No, no, might overcomes right, where I command. If he boards us, here he stops. We can make prisoners as well as he; and if he is one of those hyenas that prey upon human flesh, he'll get no cast ashore from me. The moment he steps aboard, and I hoist in my jolly-boat, square go the yards, and away goes the little Mary of London."

"Then there is no fear," said Katherine.

"Excuse a joke, ma'am," said Hilton, "there may be fear, but I'll take good care there shall be no just cause for it."

A new terror now seized Mrs. Apperton; she fancied she read treachery in the countenance of Hilton. She began to think even that he was in league against them; and that the readiness which he displayed for their accommodation in sending for the female attendant was all part of some scheme to entrap them: in short, placed as the family were, in an entirely novel situation, a thousand circumstances bearing upon them, in every shape and direction, they knew not what to think or how to act.

"Come," said Hilton, "we shall soon know who's who; he seems shy of showing, however."

It is quite impossible to describe the palpitations which affected the hearts of the different spectators of this little scene; for Hilton himself, with all his hardiness, was not so purely immaculate as to feel himself quite at ease on the approach of a stranger, although, according to his own account, he had a mode of providing for a single visiter which could not fail in its effect.

The boat approached the brig; was alongside of her; the stranger took the man rope that was thrown him, and stepped on board. He was speedily followed up the side by one of the men who had been on shore, who seemed to introduce him to Hilton. They touched their hats and turned towards the forecastle, whither they walked. The other sailor and the woman were during this period safe landed on the deck; and the man, who had presented the stranger to Hilton, seemed waiting for orders dependent upon his decision. The conversation between the stranger and Hilton appeared earnest and animated. In the mean

time the sailor, who had brought his wife to officiate as servant to Kate, was particularly anxious in presenting her to her future mistress; but neither Kate nor Maxwell had eyes or ears for any thing but the stranger, with whose arrival on board they connected something concerning themselves.

After a few minutes' parley, Hilton gave orders to hoist in the boat, and take care of the gentleman's trunk and *valise*, which appeared to be all the sea stock he possessed. These orders were speedily obeyed, the yards square, and the good brig Mary going along at a pleasant rate through the very eye of the Needles; Hilton, however, being his own pilot, relying upon the safe principle of keeping the blue pigeon going, and not caring for advice in navigating a sea as familiar to him as his own cabin.

Maxwell lost no time in endeavouring to ascertain who the new-comer was, but he gained nothing by his interrogatories. Honour among thieves was Hilton's answer to his questions, which, if not a complimentary evasion of them, gave him at least to understand that the gentleman in the boat-cloak had something to conceal. Neither Kate nor Edward could bring themselves to regard the stranger with tranquillity, or account for his arrival in the vessel with any thing like satisfaction to themselves. They thought they saw something like collusion between him and the captain, and Edward even went the length of believing that Hilton actually waited for his arrival by the steam packet, and sent his boat ashore under another pretence, but merely for the purpose of securing him on board.

A fresh breeze, as sailors call a wind in which a man cannot keep his hat on his head, springing up, and a sea rising, all the moral griefs of the Maxwell family gave way to physical ills, and mental agitation yielded the palm to bodily sickness. If the man in the cloak, instead of what he really was, had been that personage with the tail and cloven foot, of whose walk upon earth Mr. Southey has given us so clear a description, not one of the surgeon's family, including himself, would have cared one single atom; the overwhelming *mal de mer* laid them helpless in their respective beds, and closed their eyes to the world and all its sorrows.

During the continuance of this torpor, it may not be uninteresting for the reader to know, that Biddle, on his return to town, which was immediate, after his resignation — expulsion it was not — at the surgeon's, proceeded to Apperton's, and described at length, and in no very qualified terms, the ill treatment he had received, as he felt it, at the hands of his family connections. Apperton was not in a state of mind to attend very carefully to the detail of his wrongs, but rather confined himself to ascertaining that Maxwell had received and fully comprehended the nature of his communication and the instructions that formed part of it. He seemed quite reconciled to his wife's resolution of accompanying her father; and no wonder, for he had neither roof to shelter her, nor means at hand to procure her suitable accommodation. How he was himself to escape the dangers which thickened round him, now seemed to be his principal care; and he resolved, after some little hesitation as to character and appearance, in the hope of redeeming his losses, to figure in the same periodical publication with Somerford, and in all probability on the same day — I mean the London Gazette — when the one would exhibit himself in the character of a bankrupt, and the other in that of a field officer in his Majesty's army. It would be a curious coincidence if it should happen so; whether it will or not, time alone can determine; and in this pleasing state of doubt and agitation we must be content for the present to leave Mr. John Apperton and his irritated brother-in-law, Mr. Elias Biddle.

On board the brig, the day passed and the evening came, and the landsmen and women suffered still; nor were their sensations of horror and disgust at all soothed by the smell of Irish stew and savory pie, of which Hilton and his new guest partook in the cabin with the most unmitigated appetites — the stranger having grown more cheerful, and more at his ease, as the vessel got farther from the place whence she started. Hilton, however, was assiduously attentive to the Maxwells, and left nothing undone, in the shape of civilly worrying them to death, to try to eat, and to try to drink, and to try to get up, and to try to walk about; for all of which acts of nautical gallantry

every one of the party most devoutly wished him at the bottom of the element on the surface of which it was his trade to travel.

The breeze during the night moderated, so that the Mary ventured to show her top-gallant sails to the moon; and with all her canvass drawing, she ran down Channel with more speed and less motion, so that at about nine o'clock, when the invalids were a "little better," the good brig Mary was laying to, a few miles off Plymouth, and to their great surprise, the stranger, who had occasioned all their agitation and dismay, had disappeared, as indeed had the boat in which he arrived, and which had been the day before hoisted up by the davits on the starboard quarter.

It is odd enough, but not more strange than true, that the disappearance of this mysterious personage excited nearly as much alarm and apprehension in the breast of Maxwell as his previous presence had done. Still in sight of land, he felt himself liable to its ills and inconveniences; and his first question to Hilton was touching the abduction of his late companion.

"He's off," said Hilton, "and safe. You see that ship on our larboard quarter, with the red striped ensign; that was his mark. She waits for him. As soon as he sets foot on board of her, you'll see she fills and away. He's bound for New York."

"Who is he?" said Maxwell.

"Another of you," said Hilton; "smashed, ruined, and obliged to walk himself off; but, as I said before, there's honour amongst thieves."

"Yes," said Maxwell, "I quite well remember your observation; but how does that apply in the present instance?"

"Why," said Hilton, "you are all of you much in the same mess."

"But who is the gentleman?" asked Maxwell.

"Why, Mr. Maxwell," said Hilton, "he asked me exactly the same question about you; and the answer I gave him was, Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no lies. All is safe and sacred on board the good brig Mary."

"Yes," said Maxwell; "but this person came on board

in your boat, with your man and the woman who was specially sent for, to attend upon my daughter. They must have mentioned——"

"Not a syllable, I'll be sworn," said Hilton; "no, no, we understand trap. There is not a hand of mine who would not die sooner than say a word about man, woman, or child, on board my brig; this is not our first trip. Starboard, there," said Hilton, to the man at the wheel, for the Mary was now under way, edging off to pick up the boat.

"Starboard it is, sir."

"That gentleman, sir," said Hilton, "tells me news later than you can have; and that is, that Apperton must be entirely ruined. I call him Apperton, Mr. Maxwell, for I have known him from the beginning of his career.—Starboard, there."

"Ay, ay, sir, starboard."

"Nothing can save him," continued the captain; "and more than a dozen others will fall by him."

"And yet he, that gentleman, did not know *us*," said Maxwell.

"No," said Hilton; "and if you had been well enough to listen, he would, in all probability, have told you your own history as the worst story he could have found to tell against your own son-in-law. It's a bad business altogether; and right glad I am that you are safe out of it."

At this period Hilton was obliged to break off the dialogue to give directions for getting the boat aboard, which was now nearly alongside; and Maxwell retired to the cabin, which Kate was still too unwell to quit, to talk over the new intelligence he had received, which cut doubly to his heart when he recollected, that by his own activity and instrumentality, his betrayer and destroyer had become so closely connected with himself and his family, that the just opprobrium, which fell upon him for his conduct, not only entailed ruin upon himself, but brought disgrace and despair even upon his darling daughter.

When the boat was re-hoisted in, and the Mary again got clear of the land, the increased motion again overset

the voyagers; nor did their indisposition relax until after the ordeal of half a gale of wind in the Bay of Biscay.

Nautical adventures and sea journals are now so very common, and the voyage of the Mary was in itself so like a thousand other voyages, that it would be only wasting time to enter into the details of her progress towards the place of her destination. On the tenth day from her departure from Plymouth, the lovely island of Madeira was in sight; and before the close of the eleventh, Kate was safely conveyed in a moonsheel on the shoulders of two strapping African slaves, from the landing place at the Loo rock, to the house, or rather palace, of one of the most respectable English merchants at Funchal.

The elder Maxwell, who had landed first, was ready with his hospitable host to receive his daughter and her brother; and having safely deposited her in her swinging vehicle, the three gentlemen accompanied her on foot, using all their endeavours to moderate the pace of the *unfortunate* bondsmen, who trotted away with their fair load at the rate of at least five miles an hour.

When Kate heard that she was, in the first instance, to take up her residence at a merchant's house in Funchal, she formed in her mind, as indeed did her father and Edward in theirs, the outline of the establishment: a pile of stores, and cellars, and a house in a yard with gates, and a dog, and a watchman, and a weathercock, and all that sort of accompaniment. Her surprise was therefore great, when she found herself borne into a spacious quadrangle, in which, at the foot of a splendid staircase, stood grouped servants of all classes to receive her; and her surprise was rendered even still more agreeable, at finding herself welcomed to the house of her father's friend by the gentleman's wife, a lady of extremely prepossessing person, who with a cordiality of manner, and warmth of feeling wholly inexplicable to Edward, but in some degree more intelligible to Kate herself, greeted her, and caught her in her arms as if she had been receiving a sister.

Edward saw with gratitude the devoted attentions which were paid to his father; the anxiety which seemed to anticipate every wish; and felt with sentiments of equal

warmth the great and marked kindness which the master and mistress of the house evinced towards himself; and after enjoying a calm and happy evening, the delights of which were by no means weakened by the circumstance of being once again ashore, and in spacious and airy apartments, regaling on fruits ripened under the bright sun which beams over the beautiful island of which they were inhabitants, and by the recollection of the miseries of the good brig Mary, upon whose master and crew the Madeira merchant absolutely lavished his gifts of stock and wines.

Edward, when he retired to rest, felt perfectly bewildered at the extraordinary kindness of a family of which he never had heard mention made in his father's house, although it had become unfortunately very notorious all over England. The individual under whose roof they had been so nobly welcomed was no other than the son of Hanningham, the London merchant, who, some months before, had expiated the crime of murder on the scaffold.

CHAPTER X.

When gratitude o'erflows the swelling heart,
And breathes a free and uncorrupted praise
For benefits received, propitious Heaven
Takes such acknowledgment as fragrant incense,
And doubles all its blessings. LILLO.

IT is scarcely possible to describe the effect produced upon the minds of the Maxwell family, by the entire and absolute change of their situation and circumstances. They had removed from the confined streets of the city of Funchal, to the beautiful *quinta* of their hospitable friends, the windows of which commanded one of the most magnificent views imaginable. The quiet and repose which they enjoyed in this lovely seclusion afforded the most soothing contrast to the feverish excitement of the preceding fortnight; and Kate saw with pleasure and gratitude the alteration which the very delightful transition had worked upon her dear father's heart and spirits.

No place in the world, perhaps, could have been selected for their retreat, in which old associations and habits could so soon have been gotten rid of, as this very island of Madeira. In continental travelling, the alterations of manners and customs are operated gradually, and for a considerable distance from the frontiers of a country, one is prepared by certain progressive variations in costume and language, for the change of nation. One of the most rapid changes of this sort is, perhaps, effected in the passage from Dover to Calais, where in a distance of less than thirty miles, performed by sea, under the great advantage of steam navigation, in three hours, every thing that meets the eye or the ear is decidedly new; the language, the religion, the dresses, the manners and the customs of the people; and all, in fact, by one step from Mrs. Wright's on one side of the water, into Monsieur Quilliacq's on the other; but this transition, however striking, especially on account of the brevity of the process by which it is worked, is nothing when it comes to be compared to that, which the Englishman experiences, who leaves Falmouth on the first day of the week, and reaches Funchal perhaps on the last.

He quits England and its variable climate, its sharp easterly wind blowing, and a thick fog driving before it; he sees the apple blossoms peeping from the trees, and the smoke from the cottager's chimney curling amongst them; he travels, at a splendid pace, over fine roads, in commodious carriages; he sees the hardy labourer pursuing his toil, and his happy family greeting him to his home at the conclusion of his work, and he steps on board his vessel, and, at the end of a week, lands under a burning sun, in another quarter of the globe, is received on his disembarkation by his friend, with his African slaves around him; is conveyed upon their shoulders, if he likes, through the narrow streets of a Portuguese city, to the extensive mansion of an English merchant; he hears high mass performed in the cathedral of Funchal, and sees a Cardinal Bishop bestow his benediction on the prostrate multitude; he meets friars by dozens in the roads, and goes to convents and visits nuns; he sees church floors raised, and the bodies of men and

women, dressed in their ordinary habits, thrust into graves immediately under the surface of them, mashed into the earth by the axe and rammer of the sexton, covered with quick lime, and then shut up again. He sees the juicy grape hang luxuriantly around him; oranges and lemons invite him to gather them: the aloe blooms in the hedge-rows; the bamboo rustles in the breeze, and the banana clusters in the gardens, the walls of which are covered with millions of lizards, beaming in all the brilliant colours of the rainbow.

The enclosures of the vineyards in this little Paradise are formed of pomegranates, brambles and myrtles, and that most grotesque of all shrubs in the world, the prickly pear. Pine-apples are sufficiently common to be perfectly vulgar, and peaches grow wild in the valleys, the whole scene affording a combination of objects curiously, ay wonderfully novel to an English eye, and certainly not to be met with, at a similar distance, in any other direction from Hyde Park Corner.

To Edward, and even to his sorrowing sister, the strangeness of every thing around them was interesting and even exciting; but the blow which had fallen upon his father's house had, in fact, struck deeper into the young man's heart than could have been reasonably anticipated from the volatility of his character and disposition. He saw all his prospects blighted; he had neglected the study of a profession, in certain reliance on his patrimony, and now, to his sorrow, found himself, at two or three and twenty, without a pursuit, or indeed even the means of securing an existence. It was, as he felt it, no time to press his sorrows and disappointments on his father, and he therefore resolved to let the concerns of the family come to something like a settlement,, before he ventured to consult the old gentleman upon the best scheme for his future proceeding.

The present great anxiety of the party was to hear from their hopeful connection, Mr. John Apperton; upon the accounts to be contained in his letters, all their future arrangements were of course to be founded; and every sail that hove in sight was watched with longing eyes, until the certain knowledge of her name, and the port to which she

belonged, killed the hopes that her first appearance had excited.

It was now that, in the midst of her cares for her father, Kate addressed her letter to Somerford; the object of this appeal, if it might so be considered, was her self-vindication from a charge or suspicion of fickleness. She dwelt but slightly on the reverse of their fortunes, and rather painted in glowing colours the actual state of their retirement, for she knew Somerford's disposition too well, to doubt, for a moment, that his first impulse on hearing of their downfall, would be to place all he possessed in the world at her father's disposal. From any thing likely to excite this disposition she carefully abstained, for her feelings of repugnance towards such an offer on his part were considerably strengthened by the apprehension, that if it were made, her father, in his present circumstances, would not hesitate to avail himself of it.

At a great distance from a much loved object, there seems such a hopelessness of a letter reaching its destination, that one can hardly be persuaded of the necessity of despatching it at a particular moment; however, Kate was actually hurried by her kind and beautiful friend, Mrs. Hanningham, to close and seal her packet, for the master of the vessel bound to Plymouth was actually waiting in her husband's room to carry the bags on board. If the lady had not been so assiduous in her attendance, Kate, I am almost certain, would have sealed her letter with a kiss —of friendship;—as it was, this little ceremony was perhaps beneficially omitted, and Captain Somerford's epistle despatched to England.

Upwards of a month had now elapsed, and no news had arrived from Apperton. One or two ships from England had touched at the island, but none had letters; the newspapers, however, made several allusions to the flight of Maxwell and his family, which was instanced as one of the dreadful results of the too prevalent disposition for over speculation; and, as the London newspapers are always correct, they had despatched him to that common receptacle for runaway rogues—the United States of America. Apperton, the great object of their solicitude, was, in fact, too

insignificant a person to be libelled or abused, and no tidings could be seen in the public journals of him, or his proceedings; and they were doomed to wait, if not patiently, at least with an assumed tranquillity, until time and opportunity should throw a little more light upon the state of his affairs.

To Edward Maxwell, Hanningham became every day more attached; and the same spirit and principle which appeared to bind the merchant and his wife to the surgeon, evidently operated so strongly in favour of his son, that, from various hints thrown out, he could no longer doubt that Hanningham had, in the kindness of his disposition, formed some plan for his advancement and even permanent settlement in life. This appeared romantic and improbable in the highest degree; and yet when Edward saw the way in which the family with whom they were domesticated treated his father and sister, he could no longer shut his eyes to the almost affectionate attachment of his new, warm-hearted friend. To account for it, he was utterly at a loss, because, as has been already said, he had never heard the name of Hanningham, except upon the unfortunate occasion of the public execution of his present friend's father, mentioned in their house; and his surprise at the warmth and devotion of these new connections was even increased by the total absence of any thing like surprise at the exhibition of their feelings, on the part of Kate, who, to his astonishment, appeared perfectly prepared for the sort of welcome she received, and seemed to consider the unmitigated attention paid to her father as something which she fully expected, and which she seemed to look upon as a matter of duty from her new and amiable friends.

Still time went on; day succeeded day, and still they remained without news; until at length a signal was made for two ships from England—one an Indiaman with troops on board.

Till that moment, it had never occurred to Kate, that Somerford, disappointed of happiness in England, might, in all probability, return to a country where he had been so favourably received, and where, as Major Overall had described to her, he had so successfully carved his way to for-

tune; nor that should he do so, he would certainly touch at Madeira. The words Indiaman and troops brought the idea full into her mind; and she watched from her beacon tower the coming vessels with an anxiety, which she admitted to herself she should not have experienced, if she had fancied Mr. John Apperton had been a passenger in either of them.

It was a wild fancy after all. Somerford had exchanged into a regiment quartered in England, and the ship arriving was carrying out a detachment to India. Ladies, however devoted to the army, are not the best judges of military movements at head-quarters; and when she ran her eye over the list of passengers, she saw, with something like disappointment, that there were none she expected, none she knew. There were, however, letters from Apperton.

He had written a long explanatory letter to Maxwell—to Katherine, a short and cold one. It was clear that he had no intention of following them to Madeira. He had suffered the disappointment which he had experienced in his marriage, and the effect produced upon his mind by the appearance and letter of his rival (as he fancied him) Somerford, to rankle and fester in his heart: his connections were wounded by the superiority of pretension possessed by the Maxwells; and the candid exhibition of disgust at the forwardness and brutality of Biddle had been no doubt matter of argument and irritation in the family. The society of Kate, in which, when mixed with others, Apperton had felt himself pleased, was not suited to him when they were alone; and the prospect of fortune and wealth, which somehow had associated themselves in his mind during the progress of the negotiations for their marriage, having been dissipated, he saw no reason to encumber himself with a wife, and the embarrassment of an establishment, while she displayed evident marks of satisfaction in remaining separated from him, especially at a period when his time and means were fully engrossed in endeavouring to make some arrangement of his affairs, which might give him at least the advantage of personal security.

To Maxwell he had been more explicit; to him he had

submitted a statement which rendered any expectation of recovery for him utterly out of the question. Apperton had been arrested, was actually in confinement, and had given the customary notice of his intention to avail himself of the benefit of the Insolvent Act; a measure which, while it would afford him liberty and the power of recommencing business, would leave his father-in-law without the chance of regaining one shilling of his losses; for such had been Apperton's dexterity in the management of the financial affairs of the family, that he had possessed himself of all the old gentleman's property as his own stock in trade; so that whatever sums might now be made available for his emancipation from debt, Maxwell had no claim upon him as a creditor, nor indeed did he possess one single document to show the real nature of his multifarious transactions with his speculating son-in-law.

It was now decided—Maxwell was irrecoverably ruined, and his family irretrievably beggared. Indeed, Apperton, in his own security, seemed to have forgotten the amount of his last remittance to Maxwell, and to have forgotten, too, that it must, under almost any circumstances, except those in which they actually found themselves, have been entirely expended. Still he made no allusion to their personal inconveniences or difficulties, which, as circumstances prevented his sending them any supplies, common decency, one would have thought, would have prompted him to do. But, no; his long letter was filled with self and selfishness: it was manifest that self-extrication was his object; and from several hints thrown out in the course of it, it seemed equally evident that he intended, if reproached with neglect or misconduct, to throw the whole of his justification upon the fact of his bride's misconduct and hypocrisy, neither of which he had the slightest inclination to notice, either to herself or her former lover, until, by the more cunning suggestions of his vulgar relations, he had been what Mr. Biddle would call "put up" to so mean and base a manœuvre.

What a situation for Kate to find herself in! Shut out from happiness and the comforts of life, united to a man she loved not, by a marriage, the only qualifying circum-

stance of which, was the prospect of remaining separated from her husband. One little week's delay might perhaps have spared her this eternity of misery; for eternal it seemed likely to be, as far as she was concerned, since, even if the inclinations of both parties had been fully expressed, the laws of our country afford no relief to persons in their unfortunate situation. The only consolation in this wretched affair she derived from the explicit manner in which her husband explained to her father the absolute impossibility of his visiting Madeira.

"Now, Edward Maxwell," said Hanningham, "that we have seen the real character and intentions of this heartless brother-in-law of yours, it is time for me to open my mind to you on a subject which I have been for some time considering. You, with a laudable anxiety to contribute to your excellent father's comfort, and afford a suitable protection to your dear sister, have followed the fortunes of your family, and find yourself, at three-and-twenty, a wanderer in an African island. What you have seen of us may give you a fair idea of the comforts and avocations of an English Madeira merchant. In the law, had you pursued it, or if you still wish to pursue it, honours and dignity are offered for your exertions, which in our plain, plodding life, we must not expect; but we may securely look forward to competence, and eventually independence. Now, if you will gratify the first wish of my heart, by coming into my house, sharing my labours and my profits, I shall receive you with the warmth of a brother; and while I make myself happy by founding your fortunes, I shall have the satisfaction of doing something towards defraying a debt of gratitude to your father, which, if I lived to the age of Methuselah, I should never be able to repay."

"My dear Hanningham," said Edward, "consider what you offer me—how have I deserved such princely conduct?"

"Why," said Hanningham, "we Madeira people are said to be extremely hospitable so strangers: how can I better keep up our character than by offering you half my house?"

"I am overwhelmed," replied young Maxwell; "I can not reply to such unbounded liberality—I——."

"I have already talked the matter over with your father," said Hanningham: "he joins me in the wish that you should accept my offer. It will be of mutual advantage to us: for I shall make you take your turn of duty to relieve me, while I visit England. You will have no sinecure; and then, besides, Maxwell, who knows, the time may come, when you will marry and settle."

"No, no," said Edward; "I have seen the only being who could command my affections, for the last time. I am bound never to name her; and let the spell be what it may, that is over her, nothing will induce me to marry any other living being—therefore that prospect is blank. But if I thought I dare become your debtor in so vast a sum of kindness as you offer me, the hope, the chance, of giving shelter and protection to my poor deserted sister, would induce me, on my knees, to thank you for bounty so unmerited, so——"

"Stay!" said Hanningham: "it is right I should tell you so much of a sad story, as may be necessary to exonerate me from the appearance of wishing to assume too much merit in the proposal I make, and at the same time relieve you from some of your difficulty in acceding to it. You must know, that the obligation I owe your father is of the highest and most important character; that what I do, I should have felt it right to have done, even if I had not formed a strong and ardent personal friendship for yourself. Judge, then, Edward, how gratifying it is to me, to find my inclination and my duty going hand in hand, and combining to place you in a situation which I am sure you will fill with honour and credit, and which I am proud to feel would inflict no disgrace upon the best blood in the country."

"I have no choice," said Edward; "no power to reply, but to assure you that I accept with the warmest gratitude the load of favours you have heaped upon me, and that it will be my constant endeavour through life to prove to you how warmly, how truly, I feel your unexampled generosity."

"Come, then," said Hanningham, "that's settled—give me your hand, Edward. I have suffered much misery on my poor ill-fated father's account; we must now hope for

brighter days. That he was innocent of the horrid crime of which he was convicted, I am as sure as that we are alive and breathe; but that is past, and irrevocable."

This conversation, so deeply interesting, and so highly important to Edward, was here interrupted by the arrival of the elder Maxwell, with whom Hanningham left Edward, in order to debate the extraordinary act of liberality which he had just performed.

"You may," said Maxwell, "with safety accept the generous offer. The tie which unites us to Hanningham is one which, although it does not in the least detract from the nobleness of his conduct, justifies, to a certain extent, your acceptance of his proposal. I mention this, not to lessen in your eyes the value of his proceeding, but to relieve you from any thing like a feeling of dependence or degradation."

"How shocking," said Edward, "it must be for Hanningham to reflect upon his father's fate! He seems assured of his innocence."

"And so am I," said Maxwell, "convinced; and more completely so from what I have heard and seen since I have been in this island; and I believe that Providence will yet eventually disclose the truth, and thus do justice to his innocence."

"It is somewhat late, though," said Edward, "as Moss once said upon the same subject, to discover a man's innocence after his execution."

"True," said Maxwell; "but still his memory would be cleared from a foul stain, which, in a prejudiced world, leaves some of its obloquy upon his innocent relatives."

"True," said Edward; "but the world is so prone to recollect the bad part of a man's biography, and so unwilling to give credit, if they can avoid it, to any body, for good conduct, that the fact of his having been hanged will always remain on public record, while any elucidation of his innocence will only be useful as a matter of private satisfaction — if satisfaction that may be called, which involves the certainty that our dearest relative has perished wrongfully."

"This is a subject," said Maxwell, "we had better not discuss; you may be sure that my prospects and feelings

are very different from what they were when we left our country; the reception I have met with here, for which Apperton, with all his contrivances, could not be prepared, is attributable to Providence only; the miraculous circumstances which have combined to save me from destruction are evidences of the watchfulness of the Power above, over those who earnestly pray for aid and support. The results of occurrences, of which you are ignorant, make me believe that my conduct is not deemed unworthy; but there are matters connected with the whole affair which never must be touched upon, and therefore, Edward, accept with gratitude the means now offered you to shield and shelter a fond and affectionate sister. Time will unravel all that appears mysterious to you; and when the day shall come that you may be enlightened and informed, you will more clearly than ever see the wonderful power of retributive justice on earth."

"There is, sir," said Edward, having got his father upon the topic of family mysteries, "one point on which I would now venture to speak — it is the interdicted one; but *now*, considering the influence of the individual, who fills my thoughts by day, and haunts my dreams by night, may I for once, for only once, ask whither she is gone, and who she is? and whether you still bind me to the command you laid upon me, to forget her?"

"More than ever," said Maxwell; "it is an imperious duty for you never to name her; to lay a restraint upon your thoughts, Edward, is beyond my power or prerogative; nor do I bid you quite despair of obtaining my permission to speak of her — perhaps, to see her again; but for this, time is required; and I trust that the duties of your new situation will occupy your mind and expel the vision from your thoughts, at least for a while."

"But, sir," said Edward, "she is gone — you said — you told me I never could behold her again."

"Edward," said Maxwell, "when I told you so, you may be sure, I thought so. I will tell you now, that circumstances, which have since occurred, have operated strongly upon that *impossibility*. I little thought, when I spoke last to you, that you, and even much less myself

should have been driven from our country, beggars and exiles. I did not even fancy that you, for whose aggrandisement I made every effort, would have lost your patrimony, and gladly have embarked in trade in Africa; but these sudden changes have happened, and things which then seemed quite impossible, have come to pass. In what I now say, I revoke nothing of what I said before with respect to the interdiction of that subject; I must entreat you still to observe the same silence which I then enforced; but I will render it, if possible, less irksome to you, by saying, — but I must never be questioned farther, — that however improbable, it is not quite impossible, that you may again see that person."

"What, here! sir," said Edward, "in this island? I——"

"Have I not said," replied Maxwell, "that I must not be questioned farther. Be silent, pray — we are interrupted — and never, as you love me or value my comfort, recur to the subject."

Hanningham and his blooming wife, and Katherine Maxwell, who had only just been made acquainted with the arrangement about the partnership, which was so honourable to some, and so agreeable to all, here entered the room, and proceeded in due form to congratulate Edward on his accession to the firm; and the bright glow of Kate's eyes and countenance convinced her brother that she was by no means the least happy of the party.

Still there was gloom enough in the circumstances of both families to qualify their exhilaration. With the best possible disposition to forget, as much as they could, the miseries and difficulties by which they were all more or less affected, it was impossible for them to banish from their minds the recollection, that the father of Hanningham had expiated his heinous crimes on a scaffold, and that the still living husband of Kate appeared, by all who had considered his conduct, to be very nearly deserving of a similar fate.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

Can I forget him?—drive him from my soul?
Oh! he will still be present to my eyes.
His words will ever echo in my ears—
Still will he be the torture of my days,
Bane of my life, and ruin of my glory. SMITH.

WHEN Somerford received Katherine's letter at Cheltenham, his feelings, previously excited by all the public reports of the ruin and flight of the family, took precisely the turn that she had anticipated; but as I have already presumed that her description of their actual situation was of a character rather to soothe and satisfy his apprehensions for her comfort, than awaken any very violent alarm upon the subject, he was gratified with the letter, at the same time that he could not but sigh as he repressed a hope, which only could be realised by the death of another, and resolved, if it were possible, by reason on one hand, and amusement on the other, to endeavour to banish from his mind one, who, although she had excluded him from her heart, he felt was but too dear to his affections.

Among the numerous Indian connections and acquaintances whom Mr. Macleod found at Cheltenham, Somerford was extremely well received; the elderly ladies of the *qui hi* circles fêtéd and petted him, and he was "so interesting," and "so agreeable," and "sang so nicely," and played the flute "so sweetly," that, following the lead of Mrs. Mackirkincroft (who had also made Cheltenham her head-quarters), the *belles* of the watering-place nearly worried him to death with civility.

But Charles Somerford's natural abilities and general attainments qualified him for something better than a dangler after dowdy dowagers; he was destined to soar into higher circles, and breathe a better atmosphere than that of musk and japan. It so happened, that his friend Macleod, who had formed a very favourable opinion of his merit

and talents, had been specially recommended to the notice of a nobleman residing at Cheltenham, whose attention had been for many years directed towards the political state of British India, and whose views and objects, an acquaintance of his lordship's, Lord Bryanston, had imagined likely to be very much assisted by the information which Mr. Macleod, experienced as he was, by long and confidential service in the Twankey-twaddle department, could afford him on his favourite topic. The immediate consequence of this special recommendation of Mr. Macleod to the Earl of Lessingham was an invitation to dinner, in the course of conversation after which, the visiter spoke of his young friend, Major Somerford; and this led to an invitation for *him;* the consequences of which, however, most assuredly neither Charles nor the nabob anticipated.

The Earl of Lessingham was staying at Cheltenham for the benefit of the health of his grand-daughter, Lady Emily Denham, who, before the close of the London season, had broken down; and having exhibited symptoms of incipient consumption, had been exiled to the walks and waters of Cheltenham, in the hope of restoring her to health and strength. Somerford, once received into Lord Lessingham's agreeable domestic circle, appeared almost immediately to have established himself in the noble lord's good opinion, at least if the earl's estimation of his qualities might be judged by the warmth and frequency of his invitations; for he had scarcely broken the ice of introduction, when he found himself honoured with a general bidding to the house, and pressed by its aristocratic master to give him and Lady Emily his company whenever he was able to do so.

This was, perhaps, the most flattering mark of attention that Charles had ever yet received; and certainly the most gratifying, inasmuch as common observation pointed out to him that his new and exalted friend's warmth and kindness could have their origin only in a feeling of affection and regard which his own merit or manners had inspired. He was delighted and fascinated, and hesitated not to avail himself of the advantage so liberally offered, which, however, besides being in the highest degree agreeable to him-

self, excited in an equal proportion all the ill-nature, jealousy, and illiberality of the smaller fry, amongst whom he had, in the beginning of his career at Cheltenham, *tritonised*, and who felt highly indignant at being, as they considered, deserted for the peer and his parties.

It was lucky, in such a scandal-loving situation as the meddling middling circle of an overgrown watering-place, that poor Lady Emily Denham's ill state of health excluded her very much from the general society at her noble grandfather's hospitable house; for although it was extremely improbable that a nobleman, who, with all his excellent qualities, was notoriously proud of his birth and ancestry, would do so unwise a thing as encourage a constant association between the future possessor of his title and estates and a major of a "marching regiment" of foot, whose only rank in society was derived from his commission, with any other view or object than that of gratifying himself with his conversation and society; still, malice and mischief are so constantly at work in such communities, that if her ladyship had been well enough to mix constantly with her grandfather's parties, and be seen about the rides and drives in company with a handsome young officer, almost domesticated in the family, the thing would have been set down as settled, and the result probably have been the expulsion of poor Somerford from a most agreeable family, of which it never would have entered his head, in his most romantic mood, to propose himself as a permanent member.

Lady Emily, however, was always present when the circle was reduced; and the languor which illness, too rapidly gaining upon her constitution, threw over her beautiful features, gave to the natural sweetness and serenity of her countenance an additional interest, the influence of which it required all the caution of a prudent man to withstand. One short season only had she graced the *salons* of London, and more hearts than one or two were left aching, when it was found absolutely necessary to remove her from the scene of her unconscious conquests, to pure air and quiet pursuits; and here she was, domesticated with her grandfather and a female friend, once her governess,

patiently suffering and sinking, as it appeared, into an untimely grave.

Never was being more ardently attached to another than Lord Lessingham to this orphan daughter of his only son. Upon *her* would devolve, at his death, the barony of Lessingham, although the earldom would be extinct: the object of his life had been to see her well and suitably married—now it seemed but too probable that his beautiful flower would be nipped in the bud, and that all his tenderest hopes and best affections would be blighted by her loss.

Luckily, as I have said, or rather, unluckily, for the tattling tabbies of the tea-table, Lady Emily was not well enough to be seen much in public company with Somerford; but it was extremely curious to perceive, as the reader himself will be surprised to hear, that when Lord Lessingham gave Charles the general invitation to a house scarcely accessible but by the *élite* of society, one of his motives seemed to be, the gratification and amusement of his granddaughter, who had received the new visiter with a warmth and interest not usually perceptible in her manner, and which convinced the Earl that his society would be agreeable to her.

This very great readiness to accommodate himself to the wish of his darling child may seem civil overmuch to those who take merely a worldly view of things, and who cannot fail to marvel at the want of caution which a nobleman of Lord Lessingham's rank and character displayed in bringing a beautiful, amiable, and accomplished girl into constant association with an agreeable, handsome, and sensible plebeian, and that, too, at a time when illness had added to the interest she must always excite, and, on the other hand, had attuned her mind to the reception of kindnesses and attentions which, under the circumstances of her helpless—almost hopeless—situation, an affectionate being like Charles Somerford would be so very likely to bestow.

Somerford continued this intimacy from day to day, until he began to feel that his situation was growing delicate in the extreme. The idle nonsense he heard talked,

the observations which were made, even in his presence, upon his constant association with Lord Lessingham's family, since they did not offensively refer to Lady Emily, went for nothing, but he could not avoid feeling a consciousness that she herself met him with increasing pleasure, and lingered longer than she had at first been wont to do in conversation with him, after repeated warnings of the lateness of the hour from her indulgent parent; he seemed to himself to be acting dishonourably by continuing his intimacy, and perhaps — although he attributed half his apprehensions to his own vanity — engaging the affections of one, a union with whom was wholly and entirely out of the question; and nothing but the dread of appearing to believe himself admired, when perhaps he was not cared about, hindered him from coming forward and explaining to Lord Lessingham the sort of feeling by which he was actuated, and the prudence, as it appeared to him, of making his visits less frequent; but whenever he had nearly wound himself up to such a declaration, he found his noble host so pointedly kind, and so unreservedly anxious for his presence, that he felt it would be most unjust and ungenerous to check the course of such disinterested friendship, by supposing himself the dangerous person which his noble host certainly did not consider him to be.

At times, the earl would sit at a distance from the young people, and leave them to a *tête-à-tête;* and during these scenes, Somerford saw him gazing on them, as he could not help thinking, not unconscious of the character of the conversation in which they were engaged: for although love formed no part of the subject under discussion, the soft and tender manner of Somerford, and the kind, gracious reception which Lady Emily gave his attentions, were quite sufficient evidence to betray the state of her feelings, to one much less versed in the world and its ways than the Earl of Lessingham.

But there were yet stranger events in store: one of the lovers of this lovely girl, who had been caught, enchanted, and enchained during the season, arrived in Cheltenham — a young, handsome, and wealthy baronet, representing in par-

liament the county of which a large portion belonged to himself. He made a visit to Lord Lessingham's house, and was admitted.

Somerford was there — when was he not? — and although his faithful heart was impenetrable to love, and although his sense of propriety, and his self-knowledge, checked on their first appearance any symptoms of a passion which must be hopeless, he felt uncomfortable and displeased, as he saw the confident manner of the accomplished man of fashion, whose grace and ease during his stay put Somerford entirely out of humour with himself; but this feeling wore off surprisingly as he perceived Lady Emily listening to the young dandy's florid and animated description of a round of London gaieties, with coldness, and even inattention. A look full of intelligence, and something very like affection, which she threw on Charles, even while her new visiter's eyes were intently fixed on *her*, attracted his notice, and checked the volubility of his address. The visit terminated, and Lord Lessingham permitted his agreeable friend to depart without any show of cordiality, and without even a hinted wish for the pleasure of seeing him again.

This difference between the manner displayed by his lordship towards this aristocratic acquaintance, and that which immediately afterwards he exhibited towards Charles, struck Somerford more forcibly than any thing which had yet occurred during his domestication with the family. He was treated with a confidence and affection for which he could not account, except by believing that for some reason or other Lord Lessingham had resolved to select him for the husband of his angelic grand-daughter, — a supposition so wild and romantic, that it seemed the height of insanity to encourage it for a moment; and yet it made so much impression upon him, that he lived in constant dread lest the earl, with some view of that nature, should proceed to enquire the particulars of his birth, parentage, and circumstances, the candid disclosure of which, would, in all probability, work his degradation, and induce his immediate expulsion from the family.

One day, in the midst of his doubts and apprehensions,

and when Lady Emily appeared rather better, though not stronger than usual, he heard of the expected presence of some new arrivals at dinner with no great emotion, since he also heard Lady Emily call them old, and Lord Lessingham vote them bores — but they were particular friends, and had such hearts!

It was in the forenoon of this day that Somerford and Lady Emily were together alone: she was ill — worse than she had been — and there was a look of settled sorrow in her eye that riveted his gaze.

"How sweet and fresh the air is to-day!" said Lady Emily: "I should like to venture out — but I am too weak — too languid."

There was a pause in the conversation. Somerford still kept his eyes fixed on her — he saw too plainly, as he feared, that hopes for her eventual recovery were vain: he spoke not.

"I had a dreadful dream last night," said she; "I dreamt that you and I were together in a forest, and that a band of ruffians rushed upon us, and tore us asunder. I awoke in such horror, that I have not yet recovered it."

"I am too happy, Lady Emily," said Somerford, "sad as my fate was in the vision, to be of so much importance as to form a subject for your dreams."

"Charles Somerford," said Lady Emily, in a faltering but impressive tone, "whatever my dreams may be, my waking thoughts are still more fearful."

"Why say so, Lady Emily?" said Charles.

"I feel," replied she, "that I am sinking into my grave; and although death is the certain lot of all, I am but young, and I am sure I form an important part of my poor grandfather's happiness. You must be kind to him when I am gone."

"Come, Lady Emily," said Somerford, "I must not allow this. You must think of something else. You are recovering fast."

"No, no," said she: "I do not murmur, for it grieves my grandfather to hear me complain; but I shall never recover. It is to me a blessing that he has become acquainted with *you* — you suit him admirably, and he is warmly attached to you. Indeed," added she, "I ——" she could

not proceed — she covered her face with her hands, and burst into tears.

Somerford's heart beat: in tears — sweet, suffering angel! He stood upon the very edge of a precipice — one step would decide all. Katherine Maxwell was in his mind's eye, — the fond, devoted Kate — the luckless, faithless, married Kate. Emily, the lovely Emily, was bathed in tears — she had called him Charles — her look, her manner — all spoke too plainly the real character of her feelings.

"Dear Lady Emily," said Somerford, "let me entreat you not to agitate and distress yourself thus; all will be well, and we shall yet be happy."

"No, no," said Lady Emily, "*I* know myself; I might have been happy, but it is all too late."

It was evident to Charles that it was not too late, but that, on the contrary, this very moment was the precise time, at which, if he dared to make the offer, she would accept him; still, still, his first love — ay — but then she was lost to him — lost, perhaps, for ever.

"Emily," said he, taking her hand, "you must calm yourself; I have much to say — much to tell you, that perhaps will interest you."

"If it is about yourself," said Emily, "you know that it will."

"But," continued he, "I tremble to make the disclosure — my feelings are uncontrollable — I am ill fitted to soothe *your* agitation — I cannot command even my own. Oh, Lady Emily!"

"Have mercy on me!" said Lady Emily, interrupting and breaking from him; "have mercy upon me! this is all madness — madness. Heaven forgive me! leave me, pray leave me, Somerford — for God's sake leave me!"

"Not yet," said Charles. "If I could but confide my cares and sorrows to you. I have been to blame — I——"

"No, no," said Emily; "pray go — let me entreat — implore you — my grandfather will be here directly; if he sees me so agitated, he will be terrified. What have I done? — I am lost — lost. Never, never, can I look up again!"

The manner of Somerford had in a moment convinced the acute and sensitive Emily that she had committed her-

self to a man who did not reciprocate her affection; her pride, her feelings, her dignity, were compromised; her delicacy was wounded; — mortally wounded and he who could have worshipped her was agonised to the very heart, because a complication of circumstances compelled him to adopt the conduct he had pursued.

He was now placed in the most painful situation; remaining any longer on the same terms of intimacy with Lord Lessingham's family seemed out of the question; yet to withdraw himself suddenly would be to excite the suspicions of the earl, while to stay in the society of the woe-worn girl, to whom his presence now could not fail to be a cause of constant irritation and grief, would be cruel in the extreme.

As to the question of marrying her, he felt that while a chance of possessing Kate (whose heart, after her last letter, he was convinced was as much his own as ever,) remained, he could not, even with the consciousness of all the difficulties which interposed, throw that chance away by uniting himself to another; and then he argued further, that if he so compromised what he considered his honour and fidelity, and at once declared an affection for Lady Emily, which most certainly nothing but his pledge to Katherine could have prevented, what probability was there, that Lord Lessingham would ever consent to a marriage where the disparity of Somerford's rank and fortune to that of his grand-daughter seemed to form an insuperable obstacle and objection?

Matters were destined to come to a close somewhat sooner than was expected by some of the parties. Somerford led Lady Emily to her boudoir. She leaned on his arm, and he felt her tremble as they walked along. Her maid was luckily waiting for her, and Somerford resigned the wretched girl to her care; and when they parted, Lady Emily shook hands with him cordially — she spoke not — but her looks were more eloquent than such words would have been, as she would have dared to use.

What to do, how to act, Somerford could not decide the day was far advanced, and of course no step which he might eventually feel it necessary to take could be proceeded in, until the morrow; yet he dreaded to meet the

eye of Lady Emily at dinner, where he knew she would make an effort to appear, to quiet the apprehensions of her grandfather on the score of her health. Never was man more embarrassed — more mortified — more distressed.

It may seem cruel to leave him in this state of suspense and agitation,

"Racked by duty — forced by love,"

but it must be so: the reader's attention is wanted elsewhere; and he must content himself for the present with imagining the line of conduct which Somerford eventually thought it proper to pursue, always remembering, if he *should* fall, what his temptations were: constantly associated with beauty, accomplishment, rank, and talent — conscious that the lovely and interesting creature with whom he was domesticated had given him her heart, and even believing, from all he saw, incredible as it might appear, that the Earl of Lessingham would not hazard his grand-daughter's unhappiness, or the distress of her mind, by refusing to receive her orphan lover as her husband.

On the other hand, were all the ties by which his youthful feelings, and the memory of his first love, bound him to Katherine. Yet *she* had consented to abandon all hopes of *him* — she had pledged her faith to another. When he first came to Cheltenham, his object was to endeavour to overcome the recollections of his early life, and, having been discarded by Miss Maxwell, try to forget the charms of Mrs. Apperton; and in this disposition, founded upon the best principles of reason and morality, he might have remained, had it not been for the letter from Madeira. In that, she explained how she was prevailed upon to marry another, and how induced to believe that Charles had first abandoned *her*. *Then* it was, that, in spite of his first prudent resolves to drive her from his memory, Somerford's smouldering passion for Kate burst out anew, and he resolved to keep his heart for her alone; and if fate decreed that they should never be united, content himself by living upon the memory of happier days.

What effect the influence that such a being as Lady Emily possessed had, under all combining circumstances, upon this honourable and almost chivalrous determination, time, and time only, can exhibit.

CHAPTER II.

When souls that should agree to will the same,
To have one common object for their wishes,
Look different ways, regardless of each other,
Think what a train of wretchedness ensues! ROWE.

THE reader may recollect, that when Hanningham made the proposal to Edward Maxwell to take him into partnership, he stated one of the inducements to such an arrangement to be, the relief his superintendence of the business would afford him during his absence from Madeira on occasional visits to England. It was in one of these trips that he had obtained the golden prize which he now actually possessed, in the shape of a beautiful and excellent wife; and with a view of indulging her by a temporary residence with her family, as well as to settle some accounts and perhaps increase his mercantile connections, he was about to carry her to her native land, and remain there for five or six months, during which period Edward would remain the ostensible lord of the house, receiving orders and executing them, and receiving visiters, and delighting them with his kindness and hospitality—a very essential part of the conduct of a Madeira merchant, as I have always endeavoured to impress upon my readers.

When Hanningham, amongst other good reasons which he gave Edward to induce him to accept the most beneficial offer that could be made to him, enumerated these, the tyro in trade thought it was only a remote contingency, and rather considered the allusion to his friend's quitting the island as a new inducement for *him* to enter into his scheme, than a serious reference to an event, not only determined upon, but actually near at hand.

It turned out, however, that the merchant had made all his arrangements for repairing to England so soon as he should have given his new associate a sufficient insight into the conduct of his concern. Senior clerks and experienced warehousemen managed the practical part of the business, so that, as it is in government, the change of heads of departments, however it might affect the general policy, had

very little to do with the carrying on of affairs, seeing that the machinery continued the same, although the master-hand might be different.

Edward, however, felt a sort of diffidence when Hanningham announced to him that he was, after the next three weeks, to assume the sovereignty of the wine-pipes. He was placed in a new situation — a sort of responsibility, for which he was not prepared, was to rest upon his shoulders. Yet, as it was to be, he, of course, must enter upon his functions, inasmuch as he had sufficient knowledge of human nature to know that there is scarcely a man to be found, who, when offered a high place, will refuse it, on the score of a consciousness of inability to fulfil its functions.

Maxwell, who had borne the calamities which had befallen him with a wonderful degree of philosophy, seemed to sink under the flagrant ingratitude of Apperton, of whose proceedings they were kept in perfect ignorance, but whose conduct Hanningham was resolved to investigate in the closest manner during his stay in England; for it appeared to him, as a man of business, that however Maxwell might shrink from the public gaze of society at home, his exile was purely voluntary: he had suffered a total loss of property — what more could befall him? not a shadow of guilt hung over his character or transactions. Indeed, Hanningham wished to propose that the surgeon and Kate should accompany them to England, unless, previous to their departure, some intelligence should arrive which might render such a proceeding imprudent or impolitic.

The idea of again separating from Edward, and that, with the certainty of re-uniting herself to her heartless husband, was most painful to Kate, who clung with great earnestness to a difficulty which interposed itself to their accompanying the Hanninghams, as the only chance of escape from what she could not fail to anticipate as a combination of ills likely to assail her on her arrival in her native country. This difficulty arose from the circumstance of Hanningham having arranged to visit the island of Fayal on his way to England — a somewhat circuitous voyage, and only to be performed by special contrivance.

It seemed that at Villa da Horta, the principal town of

Fayal, Hanningham had a sort of agent established, whose particular business there was not very clearly defined, but who might be supposed by his enemies to have been concerned in the purchase of a peculiarly nasty composition, denominated Pico wine, manufactured from the grape which grows on the sides of the gigantic mountain that lifts its head far above the clouds, in the island so called, and which is divided only by a narrow channel from the island in which this agent was actually established.

Hanningham had, it appeared, never seen the person who had taken charge of this branch concern, whatever it was that connected him with the Madeira house; and it seemed that their communications had become so particularly confidential, that nothing but a personal interview could be relied upon for the purpose of making them effectively. Maxwell had, from the slight specimen to which he had been exposed, taken a violent dislike to sea voyages; and therefore it was that, superadded to all his other objections to returning to England by the present opportunity, the entreaties of his daughter not to subject her and himself to a protracted and difficult navigation, had a powerful effect upon him in strengthening his refusal to accompany his excellent friends to their native country.

While, however, their departure was yet under discussion, the island was suddenly agitated by an event which, if anticipated at all, had not been expected to occur so soon. This was no other than the arrival of his Excellency Lord Hillingdon, on his outward-bound voyage to an Indian government. The appearance of a fine frigate with the union jack at her mizen caused an immediate bustle, and moonsheils and bullock-carts were speedily in motion in the streets of Funchal, for the transport of passengers and luggage, in case her important inhabitant should be graciously pleased to land.

The sensation created in small communities by the sudden introduction of a great man, can only be duly appreciated by people who have witnessed its effect. The disproportioned liveliness of the jackass among the chickens, so humorously referred to in one of our modern farces, is no bad illustration to the eagerness with which the whole

small fry of a colony set out on the race of civility, or servility, to a magnate like Lord Hillingdon, with the imposing epithet of Excellency prefixed to his title, and the magical letters, G. C. B., appended to it—every one of the hurriers and bustlers wishing his Excellency at the bottom of the Red Sea, or the Black Sea, or any other coloured sea in the world, rather than in the particular spot selected for his temporary patronage and residence.

No sooner had his Majesty's ship let go her anchor, than the sound of cannon complimentary to the British flag was heard. The salute returned, the Portuguese authorities were zealously employed in ascertaining when and where his Excellency would land, and what were the proper forms and ceremonies to be observed upon the occasion; for, as I have already said elsewhere, great men afloat are so jealous of their pretensions and preliminaries, that a gun less in a salute to which a governor was entitled would unsettle his Excellency's temper and disposition for the whole of his stay, or perhaps involve two countries, in perfect amity at the moment, in a bloody and expensive war.

Governors, and generals, and admirals, on their arrival at Madeira, generally fall to the lot of one or two of the leading mercantile houses; and the adventures of many a well-remembered day of pleasure and hospitality passed there, are recounted on the hottest shore of Hindostan, or in the remotest of African islands, where the names of Gordon, Keir, or Blackburne, stand most honourably recorded. Hanningham's was, however, but a secondary house —he himself a young man and a young merchant; therefore he was free from all care and anxiety about the arrival of the expedition, although not certain that some of the official minnows might not grace his hospitable board. He was therefore equally busy with his neighbours: all the available rooms of his spacious house were turned into bedchambers, and the highest floor in the building was selected for the accommodation of those who had a claim to the highest posts.

Maxwell, who felt a sort of shiness and awkwardness on being recognised as a refugee by his inquisitive friend, the new governor, still thought, that from such a source,

if he had any opportunity of conversing with him, he might perhaps derive some more authentic information, not only of the popular opinion concerning himself and his flight, but of public affairs in general, by which he might regulate his future proceedings; more especially those connected with the voyage which his affectionate friend Hanningham considered it absolutely necessary that he should take. Whatever embarrassment the surgeon might have felt at the renewal of his acquaintance with Lord Hillingdon, under the circumstances, the consciousness of guilt could in no manner affect it; for the most malignant of his enemies could charge him with nothing but a blind reliance upon his son-in-law, to whom alone all the misconduct of their concerns could be attributable.

Accordingly, Maxwell determined to pay his respects to the governor-general, who was to hold a levee at the house where he had fixed his residence, on the day after his landing. Edward was to accompany him in his mercantile capacity; and the whole party from Hanningham's were invited to meet his Excellency at dinner in the evening.

It is too notorious, and too evident to all of us, to require a word of comment, that every one believes himself and his particular concerns to be the objects of constant and universal interest and observation; and Maxwell, man of the world as he was, could not divest himself of the notion that all London was occupied, and had been occupied ever since he left it, in discussing his demerits and his migration, debating the misconduct of his son-in-law, pitying his misfortunes, and sympathising in his distress. Good, easy man! for three days after his flight, his own personal friends said they were very sorry for it, and called him a kind, good-hearted person—said, his was a pleasant house to be at, and that Kate was *so* kind, and such a daughter, and had such a heart, and so on; but by the evening of the fourth day they had ceased to wonder where they had run off to, and before the next Sunday their names were never heard. As to the public in general, one solitary paragraph in the city article of a morning paper mentioned that a well-known surgeon at the west end of the town was amongst the serious sufferers by the mon th's speculation

—and there an end. So that when he advanced up the large drawing-room, in the bay-window of which, his Excellency, Lord Hillingdon, G. C. B., was ensconced, convinced that his appearance would throw his Excellency into an ecstasy of surprise and wonderment, his own astonishment far exceeded all he expected to perceive in the noble lord, when his Excellency, after looking for a moment at him through an opera-glass, which he held in his right hand, recognised him without emotion, and accosted him just as if he had met him in St. James's Street, or in any other of his accustomed walks.

"Ah, Maxwell, how d'ye do?" said his Excellency: "what, are you living here, eh?"

"Yes, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Come for your health, eh?" said his Excellency; "fine climate, is not it? hot in summer, eh? What—don't you find great benefit from the air, eh?"

"Why, my lord," said Maxwell, "I should not have come here from choice; but (as your Excellency knows) my misfortunes——"

"Oh," said his Excellency, "ah, ah, by-the-by, I do recollect something about it—you burnt your fingers in the funds—what?—bad speculation—great many people ruined—served them right—don't you think so, eh? Fools and their money soon parted—what?"

"Why, my lord," said Maxwell, endeavouring to interest his Excellency so far as to lead him to the never-fading subject of his own thoughts and cogitations, "those who lead the unwary are to be blamed. I had great reliance upon Mr. Apperton, whom your Excellency knows married my daughter."

"Oh, I do," said Lord Hillingdon: "I recollect now—I never could recollect—Applepye, I used to call him. Ah, sad fellow that, wasn't he? I saw something about him in some of the courts, and I thought of *you:* I recollect—we had such a laugh about something, I forget what. He's dead, isn't he?"

"Not that I know of," said Maxwell: "is he, my lord? To *me* that intelligence would be very important."

"Upon my life," said his Excellency, "I don't know

—somebody, they told me, was dead; but I am not sure that it was not you they said was dead, or gone to America, or something. I recollect being very much interested at the time, because a groom of mine, an invaluable servant, broke his leg or his arm, I forget which, now, and I wanted you to set it; but I don't recollect whether it was then I heard of your death, or of the death of—what d'ye call him?"

"Apperton, my lord."

"Ah," said his lordship, laughing, "Apperton—that's it—he! he! he!"

"Allow me to present Mr. Bamford to your Excellency," said somebody near Maxwell, to whom his Excellency forthwith turned; at which opportune moment, a crowd of aspirants for his Excellency's smiles pressing forward, the surgeon was shut out of the circle, and left beyond its confines, with just so much of information as could not fail to unsettle his mind, and derange all his prospects and calculations, without satisfying one doubt, or allaying one apprehension.

"Come," said Maxwell to his son, "let us go home; that man has no feeling; he is too much occupied with himself to care about *me;* and all he has done is to excite a new train of thoughts and anticipations in my mind about the fate of Apperton. We will say nothing of this to Kate," continued the surgeon: "perhaps we may gather some further information from some more considerate person, in the course of to-day or to-morrow."

What particular sentiment Maxwell was apprehensive of exciting in his daughter's bosom by the rumour of her husband's death, it might not be delicate, perhaps, under all the circumstances, to enquire; but he could not help attaching some credit to the confused statement of his noble friend, seeing that another opportunity had occurred of writing, of which Apperton had not availed himself. Edward went so far in expressing his feelings, that as they turned the corner of the Rua dal Bispo, he ventured to say that he thought the news was too good to be true.

This might sound uncharitable, and even improper; but when Apperton's conduct is taken into consideration, the

nature of his connections, and their evident disposition towards the Maxwells; and with all these, the release it would be for Kate, and the power it would give her of realising the early dreams of her happiness; our young wine-merchant may, perhaps, be excused. Still, however, while they were in doubt, it was prudent to observe a perfect silence on the subject as far as Kate was concerned, since, even were the fact so, it might not be impossible that Charles had, before the event occurred, destroyed the still lingering hopes of his once-loved Kate. That he was in a somewhat perilous position we know, and should he have fallen!—but it is not my business to anticipate.

Maxwell, on his return home, communicated to Hanningham what had occurred at the levee, and Hanningham admitted the credibility of the report, connected as it was with Apperton's very extraordinary and continued silence. It was clear that none of the Biddles would trouble their heads to announce his death to the Maxwells, from whom there was nothing to be expected, even if they knew how to address them; and however confused the notions of the governor-general might be as to matters which did not concern him, it seemed very unlikely that he should have received an impression that Apperton was actually dead, if something had not really occurred to impress upon his mind an event connected with a man whose name he could never command his memory sufficiently to recollect.

Upon the whole, Hanningham and the two Maxwells, after considering and debating the matter over and over again, came to the conclusion, that the probability was greatly in favour of the story. However, the next day, Hanningham thought, would put an end to their doubts, inasmuch as the surgeon of the frigate had on board a file of English papers, from which in all probability they would learn the real fact; the papers actually in circulation from the ship, being only the *latest* from Plymouth (the recency of their date being their great merit): from those the anxious enquirers could gain no information respecting that which had happened, perhaps, more than a month or six weeks previous to the departure of the vessel from England.

Maxwell was naturally very much agitated and worried

by the intelligence so abruptly and loosely given by Lord Hillingdon, and not a little discomposed at what he felt the haughty and distant manner of his Excellency; his entire ignorance of what was of so much importance to *him*, and the careless way in which he glanced to the topics in which he was most interested, and then struck off at a tangent into mere matters of form and ceremony, to receive a man whom he had never seen before, and whom, in all probability, he would never see again, wounded the feelings of the poor exile; nor was he less annoyed by what he thought a decided change in Lord Hillingdon's conduct and bearing towards him, by an apprehension that the alteration had taken place in consequence of reports prejudicial to his character as a man of honour. Poor Maxwell! long as he had lived, and able as he was to judge of others, he had not yet learned to decide impartially where self was concerned; else would he have known in a moment that Lord Hillingdon at Brighton and his Excellency the governor-general at Madeira were two distinct persons. His Excellency was playing the royal game of humbug in the first stage of his progress to supremacy. The thing was new to him, and he liked it. He heard cannon roar when he left the ship, and other cannon roar responsive as he approached the beach: the smoke as it curled from their brazen mouths was incense to his vanity; and when he saw guards turned out, and bare-headed counsellors waiting his approach, it gave him a foretaste of splendour to come, and all minor objects faded from his view.

Here was Major O'Callaghan ready to take his Excellency's hat, and Captain Guffinshaw in attendance for his Excellency's gloves; his Excellency's military secretary on his Excellency's right, and his Excellency's private secretary on his Excellency's left; and there were deputy-adjutants-general, and deputy-quarter-masters general, and assistant-quarter-masters-general, and assistant-adjutants-general, in scarlet and silver, and deputy-commissaries-general, and assistant-deputy-assistant-commissaries-general, in blue and gold, and town majors, and fort majors, and brigade majors, all destined for the service of his

Majesty in various parts of his distant dominions, swelling the train of his Excellency the governor-general, who found himself acting king, in a wine-merchant's drawing-room at Madeira.

Could it be expected that Maxwell's griefs, or Maxwell's pleasure, or his hopes, or his fears, could have any weight with such a man, at such a moment? Maxwell, however, thought differently, and imagined that, after dinner, perhaps, he might edge in an enquiry or two of his Excellency, which might again lead to the subject nearest his heart; and this expectation chiefly led him to fulfil the engagement he had accepted, to meet his Excellency at the entertainment prepared for him.

Kate, who, by experience, had learned to read her father's countenance, was thoroughly convinced that something had occurred at the levee in the morning to ruffle and worry him; but she never guessed the principal cause of his agitation; and Hanningham, who saw the propriety of keeping her in ignorance of the report of her husband's death, until it should be one way or another confirmed or contradicted, took the most prudent measure to prevent her enlightenment, by not mentioning the circumstance to his wife, knowing, as he did, that the next day would end their suspense; and apprehensive as he was, that female sympathy would induce his better half to let slip the information, vague as it was, in order, as he considered it, to gratify her friend by a piece of intelligence which he rather believed would be any thing but affecting to her.

The day passed on in a state of hurry, heat, and bustle, such as nobody, who has not seen a colonial city in a tropical climate, with a newly-landed governor in it, can possibly appreciate: the bullock-waggons creaking and rattling down to the beach, loaded with wine, for his Majesty's service and the establishment of his Excellency, added a liveliness to the scene; and Lord Hillingdon proceeded, attended by all the authorities, immediately after the levee, to visit the cathedral, the curious chamber of Skulls, the Prado, the Portuguese governor, and, in short, all the curiosities of Funchal; after which, his Excellency, mounted on a mule (the tail of which was held by

the muleteer during the course of his Excellency's journey), ascended the hill by the Convent de Nuostra Senora del Monte to the beautiful quinta of his Excellency's excellent host, where a magnificent collation was prepared, with which the party amused themselves until it was time to return to town to dinner.

Meanwhile, the captain of his Majesty's frigate had been busying himself in superintending the embarkation of wine and stores, and hurrying, as much as in him lay, the departure of the ship under his command; seeing that he was especially anxious to get upon the Indian station, of which his uncle happened to be naval commnder-in-chief, and where, independently of increased allowances and certain freights of specie, he was desirous of enjoying the society of his said uncle's fair daughter Matilda, to whom it was generally supposed he would eventually be united.

Whatever occurs in this little world of ours, small or great, important or insignificant, woman is the *primum mobile* of all. This being a subject which I intend, if I live, to illustrate more at length than I am able here to do, I shall not enlarge upon the important truth; but so it is, and to the potency of female influence was entirely attributable, in the present case, the frustration of certain hopes and expectations entertained by Hanningham and the two male Maxwells.

At about eight o'clock in the evening the party assembled for dinner, and the heat and the splendour had never been exceeded in the island of Madeira. His Excellency laughed and joked, and drank wine, with all his surrounding friends: their names, which, like their persons, were wholly unknown to his Excellency, having been previously written on a slip of paper, and placed at the side of his Excellency's plate; but Maxwell was far from the magnet of attraction, and Hanningham equally distant. The Portuguese authorities and the strangers had all the places of honour, and no opportunity occurred for the surgeon to edge in his word of enquiry during the prolonged banquet.

It was late when the master of the house considered it right and proper to rise and make a speech, which of

course concluded with a proposal to drink the health of his Excellency the governor-general, and long life and happiness to him. The noise which succeeded the announcement of this toast is inconceivable: the rattling and clattering of plates and spoons, and the infinity of *pas seuls* danced by the innumerable wine-glasses, were marvellous and astonishing, when, amidst the clatter, his Excellency, flushed with pleasure, and glittering with the decorations of chivalry, arose, and spoke as follows:—

"Sir,—I have no hesitation in saying that this is the proudest moment of my life. To find myself surrounded by all the intelligence and respectability of such an important and enlightened community as the inhabitants of Madeira, is a gratification, sir, which no language of mine is adequate to express. When our feelings, sir, transcend the power of expression, it is unjust to those feelings to attempt to express them.—Sir and gentlemen, I do assure you I am most grateful to you all for the very unexpected and unmerited honour you have done me, and I beg to drink all your very good healths in return."

This speech, novel in its construction, in the thoughts it contained, and in the language in which these thoughts were embodied, produced more delight, and more rapture, and more noise: it was followed by the health of the governor, then those of the council, then that of the bishop, afterwards the collector of customs, then the tide-waiters, then the advocate-general, the master of the house, the captain of the frigate, the king of England, the king of Portugal, and a great variety of others. When, after a prodigious preparation of shouting, his Excellency rose, and again spake.

"Gentlemen," said his Excellency, "I have just been informed by my gallant friend Captain Skysail, that he proposes sailing to-morrow morning. I have been intrusted to his care and guidance to the place of my destination, and I am too proud to obey his orders in every thing relating to the noble service of which he is so distinguished a member. I regret, however, the necessity which has urged him to the decision of quitting your hospitable shores so speedily; and I cannot take leave of

you without once more expressing my grateful feelings for the great kindness and distinction with which I have been received amongst you. Gentlemen, if I were to speak for hours, I could not say half what I feel in parting from you. Gentlemen" (his Excellency here was very much affected), "God bless you!"

This was the climax: the band struck up "God save the King"—the whole company rose—Major O'Callaghan gave his Excellency his Excellency's hat—Captain Guffinshaw handed his Excellency his Excellency's gloves, and his Excellency, leaning familiarly on the arm of Captain Skysail, proceeded to the drawing-room, where coffee was prepared, and the ladies were assembled.

In the midst of this galaxy of beauty, English and foreign, his Excellency stood (his eye-glass at his eye), bowing graciously and gracefully to every body and every thing round him. Kate, who was by no means anxious to put herself forward, was leaning on Mrs. Hanningham's arm, at the outside edge of the circle, when she caught his Excellency's notice.

"Who is that?" said his Excellency to the master of the house: "I know her face—eh!"

"Mrs. Apperton," said the master of the house; "she——"

"Oh, I know—eh—what—Maxwell's daughter?" said his Excellency; and advancing towards her, drew her forth from the brilliant crowd.

"Have you been long here?" said his Excellency.

"Some months, sir," said Katherine.

"Sweet island," said his Execllency—"charming people, eh?—fine climate—curious place, eh?—the bone-house—all built of heads and legs—what?"

"I have never seen it, sir," said Kate.

"Strange that," said his Excellency; "why not?"

"I believe because I had no curiosity," replied Mrs. Apperton.

"I call it the Scullery, eh," said his Excellency; "very odd place. Is Maxwell here?"

"Yes, sir," said Kate.

"I was very sorry to hear such bad accounts of him,"

said Lord Hillingdon; "very foolish, I believe, eh; nothing very wrong—only weak—great many people ruined last year, eh?"

"Confidence in one whom we esteem, sir," said Katherine, anxious at all times to vindicate her beloved father, "cannot surely be called folly."

"I don't know, I'm sure, do you?" said his Excellency. "Pray who is that tall lady with the green feathers?"

"*I* don't know, sir," said Kate, whose eyes were half full of tears, caused first by the slur which his Excellency had cast upon her parent's conduct, and next by the frivolity with which he glanced from a subject, to her of the most vital importance.

"Not know!" said his Excellency; "that's very odd. If I lived here a week I should know every body, and all their histories, and the histories of all their families, eh?—Pray what was the man's name who ruined your poor father?" added his Excellency, in a tone of affectionate consideration.

"Sir!" said Kate, trembling from head to foot.

"Some man, you know, who led him into all his scrapes," said Lord Hillingdon.

"It was," stammered the poor daughter of Maxwell; "it was—I don't know, I—it——"

"Oh, dear, dear, dear! I forgot," said Lord Hillingdon. "I hear so many things, and have so much to think of; it was his son-in-law. Ah—that—oh, your husband, by-the-by—dear me. I beg pardon, Apple—ah, Apperton, yes, yes, I recollect, eh?—what? Well, I don't think you can lament his loss much, eh?"

"His loss, sir!" said Kate, astounded.

"No weeds, no weeping, eh?" said his Excellency; "not the fashion here, I suppose, what?"

"Weeds!" said Kate, more agitated.

"He's dead, is not he, eh?" said his Excellency.

"Dead!" said Kate—and it was all she did say: the shock was too sudden to be borne, and wound up as her feelings had been by what appeared to her untutored mind a heartless combination of absurdities, the blow overcame her, and she fell back into the arms of her friend Mrs. Hanningham.

The confusion incidental to a *scene* naturally followed. Maxwell ran to his daughter's assistance, Mrs. Hanningham led her out; Hanningham was in attendance upon his lady; and Edward, surprised at the bustle at the upper end of the room, no sooner heard the cause of it than he joined the retreating party, who reached home before poor Katherine was restored to a perfect consciousness of what she had heard, or what had happened.

Maxwell now determined to wave all ceremony upon a point so very important to his views and prospects, and resolved upon seeking his Excellency's presence before his departure, and endeavouring, if possible, to ascertain from him the grounds of his assertion, or rather of his supposition, that Apperton had shuffled off this mortal coil; and after soothing his child, and consigning her to the sisterly care of her friend Mrs. Hanningham, retired to rest, assuring himself that the next morning would relieve his doubts and uncertainty.

But we live a life of disappointments—at least they did, which is at present more to the purpose; and so it was to happen, that neither could Hanningham avail himself of the surgeon's file of newspapers, nor Maxwell gain his much-looked-for audience of the governor-general; for Captain Skysail, who was what is called an uncommon smart officer, having suggested to his Excellency that *he* was going to sleep on board; that the moon shone bright, and the breeze was most refreshing; and that they should save several hours' delay in the morning if he would return to the frigate too. His Excellency, whose accommodations on board were splendid, and who had not yet trained himself to the early hours of an Oriental life, and therefore did not exactly relish the idea of turning out by gunfire the next day, immediately fell into the plan for repairing to the ship forthwith; and, accordingly, having taken leave of his host and his family, with every demonstration of politeness and gratitude, his Excellency embarked in Captain Skysail's barge, and was, before eight bells had been struck, snugly deposited in his cabin on board.

No sooner was it ascertained that his Excellency was gone, than the assistant adjutants-general were seen running

about Funchal by the light of the moon, to find out the deputies adjutants-general, and the deputy-assistant assistant deputy commissaries-general were flying in all directions to find out the assistant deputies commissaries-general, in order to scramble on board how they could, and as fast as they could, the personal staff of his Excellency sticking as close to his Excellency's heels as a troop of chickens to the maternal hen.

Captain Skysail was too taut a hand to have any stragglers ashore—every soul, man and boy, was aboard by sunset: so no cause of delay existed amongst the nauticals; and when Maxwell, who slept in the uppermost floor of the house of Hanningham, Maxwell, & Co., put his venerable head out of a window which commanded the harbour of Funchal, his surprise was inconceivably great when he found no vestige of his Majesty's frigate visible. If he *had* seen her, his proficiency in the art of nauscopy would have beaten that of M. Bottineau himself; for the noble vessel was, at the period of his observation, some forty miles from the hospitable island of Madeira.

CHAPTER III.

Shall I ne'er bask in her eye-shine again,
Nor view the love that played in those dear beams,
And shot me with a thousand thousand smiles? LEE.

THE vexation and disappointment of the parties so deeply interested in the rumour which had reached them of Apperton's death, when they found the frigate gone, and the meanso f confirming the intelligence, one way or the other, consequently taken from them, may easily be conceived. There was, however, no remedy for it; and it would have been wholly inconsistent with Hanningham's plans to wait until the real facts concerning Apperton could be ascertained.

Under existing circumstances, as the diplomatists have it, Maxwell and his daughter felt an inclination to accompany the Hanninghams to England; for although the voyage would be doubled in extent, and more than doubled

in duration, by the *détour* to Fayal, still the society of friends and other circumstances, the importance of which, Maxwell seemed more fully to appreciate than Katherine, decided them at least to discuss seriously the project of joining the party.

To Edward, the new arrangement of their going was not quite so agreeable as the old one of staying; for although Funchal is a very agreeable place, and the country round it beautiful, still to be left in a huge rambling house, without any associates, and with nothing to console him but the recollections of his lost Maria, were not the most pleasing anticipations in the world. However, he had embarked in the business, and must of course take his turn in the annoyances: he would next spring visit England himself, and perhaps by that time the mystery about his unknown fair one would be cleared up. In this hope he certainly was encouraged by a change, trifling enough, it must be confessed, in the tone of his father's later conversations on the point; and he clung to that change with an earnestness and anxiety, which those who are unable to appreciate warmth of feeling might be pleased to consider romantic, and even foolish.

One thing struck Edward and Katherine as strange in their parent's conduct at this crisis: hating as he did the sea, and having vehemently expressed his disinclination to increase the length of the voyage homewards by a *trajet* to Fayal, he suddenly appeared to admit the plausibility of his friend Hanningham's representations with regard to certain advantages likely to accrue from their undertaking the expedition together; and all at once, as it were, expressed an anxiety to visit an island of which few people know much, and of which it is most probable Maxwell himself knew nothing.

This alteration in his views and remarks upon the undertaking, his son and daughter attributed to his belief in the report of Apperton's death, and an anxiety to avail himself of the assistance and advice of Hanningham, when they should arrive in England; and they attributed his silence as to the real motive which had induced him to alter his original determination in this respect to a de-

licacy and desire not to agitate his daughter's feelings, by a reference to an event which, however little it might excite her grief, must at all events deeply interest some other of her feelings.

It was quite evident to Edward, who from his position in the house was naturally aware of all its mercantile transactions, that the agency of Mr. Wilson at Fayal, as far as it concerned their trade or speculations, was of infinitely small importance; because during the whole period of his partnership — which to be sure was not a very considerable one — not a single communication had been received from the island in which his branch of the house was established: nor could he at any time ascertain from Hanningham the nature or character of *their* Mr. Wilson's operations there. If he ventured to ask, he was quieted by an assurance that he would know in time, and that it was a matter of great interest to them to keep the affair perfectly quiet and private; and under these circumstances, and seeing that there are secrets in all families, Mr. Maxwell, jun. continued his avocations at Funchal, without very much troubling his head with what was going on at Villa da Horta.

As the period of the departure of the party approached, the elder Maxwell became constantly agitated and uneasy. This his kind and attentive children and friends attributed to the anxiety which a man at his time of life must, under his circumstances, feel at the prospect of a return to his native country beggared, and, for all he knew, robbed of his good name, and made poor indeed, by the misrepresentations of those to whose knavery or folly he had fallen a victim. But Kate thought she saw something beyond selfishness in the emotions which her parent displayed. What might be the cause she did not presume to surmise; nor did she permit herself to encourage the suspicion which she entertained, that the voyage to Fayal was somehow connected with the subject upon which she was pledged to her father never to speak.

To her, who had connected this vital secret with another almost equally serious matter, at least as far as her brother was concerned, this voyage had therefore become

important and interesting; although she had but slender grounds for imagining that her father's fixed determination and stern decision about the beautiful vision was in any degree mixed up with the persons or events involved in the discovery she had made.

It was unfortunate for Kate, that when she had unintentionally become acquainted with so much of the secret which was evidently of such importance to her father, as her eyes could put her in possession of, the old gentleman had, in the height of his agitation, actually explained so much more as to put himself completely in his daughter's power. If he had, as the colloquial phrase goes, kept his own council and said nothing, what was exhibited to the sight of Katherine would neither have illuminated her, nor committed her parent. As it was, this probably unintentional communicativeness, which rendered her the depositary of the mystery, kept her father in a constant state of anxiety, lest she should disclose the facts connected with the scene, and kept her in equal apprehension lest any body else should find them out.

"Kate," said Maxwell, on the day previous to their embarkation for Fayal, "I am going to speak to you on a subject — on the subject, I should rather say, which has been so long interdicted in our conversations."

"Let me entreat you, sir," said Mrs. Apperton, "do not add to the weight upon my mind, by making any new confidence. I am sure I have bitterly repented, ever since, the rashness which made me acquainted with what I already know."

"Circumstances," said Maxwell, "not any communication of mine, must shortly give you fresh information upon that point; and since, perhaps, we may have few opportunities of speaking together alone on board the vessel, I thought it prudent and proper to put you on your guard, and prepare you for what you may see when we arrive at Fayal."

"I comprehend, sir," said Kate; "and have you known that the individual whom we are there to see, was ——"

"Hush! hush!" said Maxwell, interrupting her; "never more let the sound of that name escape your lips.

I only knew the fact, when our good friend here became most urgent that we should accompany him with his wife on their voyage. The rumours respecting Apperton have made me anxious to visit England; but it must be done with caution, and, in the first instance, under an assumed name. This could not have been well arranged without something like confederacy; for, unless I had an active and intelligent person at liberty to make enquiries, and ascertain the real state of affairs, while I lay concealed, my object could not be attained. This it was, that made me anxious to avail myself of our kind friend's aid and presence. Hating a protracted navigation, I therefore strongly urged the uselessness of a visit to his agent at Fayal, which will, we know, double the distance, and in all probability more than double the duration of our voyage. It was then, and then only, that I ascertained what I had before suspected; but so strongly was our friend bound by feeling, and the injunctions he had received, that it was only when I announced my determination to abandon all idea of returning to England, in consequence of his resolution to extend the voyage, that he told me the truth; and when he did, it was with regret, because, in addition to the feelings so natural to his kind heart, he had anticipated the pleasure of surprising one, whom he is pleased to consider his greatest benefactor."

"And I shall again see that person?" said Kate, "with what different feelings! — the kindness we have experienced here will never be forgotten by me; and I shall with gratitude receive and cherish any one, who is naturally so ——"

"Stay, stay, Kate!" said Maxwell; "we are interrupted — now, not a syllable to Edward upon this matter; he knows nothing from you of what you knew before, and therefore cannot be interested in the present part of the affair."

"I can safely aver that he does not," said Kate; who thought the assertion of her father sounded very much like a question.

"My feelings, with regard to *him*," said the surgeon, "are of the most painful nature. I am sure, quite sure, that his romantic attachment is preying upon his spirits,

and bearing him down; if I could explain the real circumstances of that case, you—you would indeed be surprised; but——"

"I can almost surmise," said Mrs. Apperton, "but it seems too improbable."

"Not another word, Kate," said her father; "you will soon have an opportunity of judging more clearly on the subject; but remember, not a syllable to my poor boy, whose anguish could only be increased by increased knowledge on the subject."

"Am I right in my suspicions?" said Kate. Maxwell hesitated.

"Surely you may trust me with *all*," said she.

Maxwell looked sceptical: he knew her affection for her brother.

"It is useless to say any thing on the subject," said Maxwell, after a moment's pause. "What you may surmise or guess, I know not: but it would be worse than cruel to speak on the subject to Edward; for any favourable result to the extraordinary attachment he has formed is impossible!"

"Father," said Kate, "whether I am right, or whether I am wrong, in my supposition, I know not; but, oh! do recollect how much happiness—how many hearts have been sacrificed to prejudice; and——"

"Prejudice!" repeated Maxwell—"yes—but in *this* case——"

"Then I *am* right," exclaimed Katherine.

"I do not admit that," replied her father; "but if you were, I think you will admit, that it would be impossible to conquer one's feelings on these points."

"That depends upon circumstances," said Kate: "supposing the kind hostess of the house in which we have been so kindly received here had objected to marry the lord of her choice, and secure the husband whom she adores, because he is the son of a convicted murderer?"

"It might have been weak and idle," said Maxwell; "but it is not a case in point, because, unfortunately for your argument, Kate, they were married before the horrid catastrophe occurred."

"And would you have destroyed the happiness of your child," said Kate, "supposing an attachment to have existed between her and the son of Hanningham, even if the crime of which he was convicted had been committed, after its existence was known to you?"

"Kate," said her father, "do not urge me on such a point: every word you utter gives me an additional pang. Heaven knows, I have already sacrificed too much to prejudice——"

"To risk a repetition, my dear father," said Kate, "of the sorrows your delicacy of feeling has unintentionally caused If I am right in my guess about Edward——"

"Keep your suspicions to yourself," said Maxwell, "and give me time to consider the subject dispassionately; but let me implore you, not a word to *him*. I should not have touched upon any subject connected with these matters; but, as I have already said, I was anxious to guard you from any violent surprise on your arrival at Fayal. where as much caution is to be observed, as here, or any where else."

The conversation was here terminated by the arrival of company, and Kate felt now nearly convinced that, notwithstanding the romantic improbability of the circumstances, she was not altogether deceived in her suppositions concerning her brother's attachment to the visionary beauty.

It was singular enough, that the conversation had scarcely ended, when Edward, wholly unaware of its nature, turning towards his sister, began a discussion as to his feelings with regard to Maria, and a disquisition into the course which he ought to pursue with regard to her on the eve of his father's departure for England. The embarrassment in which Katherine found herself thus unexpectedly involved was excessive. The delicacy with which she was constrained to treat the subject upon which she felt assured she was perfectly well informed, and the difficulty of denying any knowledge of the real state of the case without committing herself, either to her father or Edward, was such as a mind naturally addicted to truth and candour could scarcely manage.

"You recollect, Kate," said Edward, "that one day,

at Brighton, you expressed your belief that you had discovered who that dear inexplicable creature is; surely I have suffered a sufficiently long period of probation; tell me what you meant. The crisis is at hand, for with to-morrow vanish all my hopes of hearing of her again."

"You must forgive me, my dear brother," replied Mrs Apperton, "if I maintain the same silence as I have hitherto observed upon the subject. It is true, your father leaves you, but his departure by no means adds to the difficulties which interpose between your hopes and their completion."

"You, then, really know who she is?" said Edward.

"Indeed I do not," answered his sister; "I have my suspicions; and to-day, for the first time, have mentioned them to my father; but I can get nothing like a decisive and satisfactory answer."

"To-day, Kate?" said her brother.

"To-day," replied Kate. "I have ventured, this very hour, to plead your cause—to endeavour to show my dear father the danger, and ill success, too, of trifling with genuine feeling, and separating two congenial hearts, for the sake of some prejudice."

"If I could speak to my father——" said Edward.

"I should advise you to leave things as they are," said Kate; "circumstances may arise—at least, if the case is as I suppose it to be—which may facilitate the business; for of this I am quite sure, if I am right in my conjecture, what has happened during the last few months must have made a considerable alteration in the nature of the affair."

"That is to say," said Edward, "misfortune on one hand, and villany on the other, having reduced me from the station which I then held, to one of a lower degree, I may now, without injury to the dignity of my family, admit the pretensions of this lovely girl to share my decreased fortune, and my deteriorated character."

"Depend upon it you are wrong," said Kate. "If the young lady be the person I suppose, and if she possess sense and feeling, likely to ensure your happiness in life, she will feel no disinclination to become the wife of an English merchant. I repeat to you, I *know* nothing,

except, that your only course is silence on the subject, and patience for the developement of events: there is much yet to be known — much to be discovered — much to be undergone, and much to be overcome; but this I tell you, a premature and hasty measure, at this crisis, would perhaps ruin all your hopes."

"Hopes, Katherine!" said Edward: "have I, indeed, hopes?"

"Ask me no more," said Mrs. Apperton; "but if you believe in my affection — if you have faith in my judgment — let my father go to England unquestioned by you; I shall be near him through the voyage: he feels more bitterly than I can bear to see the sacrifice he has already made of *my* happiness, and gazes with regret on the wreck of all his hopes; rely, then, upon my good offices, and live upon this declaration — that the case is not altogether hopeless."

"I must of course submit myself to the dictates of my counsel," said Edward: "I retain you then — be eloquent in my cause, obtain me a verdict, and my gratitude will be unbounded, as my affection is devoted to you. As for Apperton, Kate, perhaps he will now insist upon your remaining with him in England."

"Oh, Edward!" said Kate; "how am I to act towards that man, if he yet lives? am I liable to be compelled to stay with him — the destroyer of my happiness — the betrayer of my poor father?"

"And, worse than all," said Edward, half maliciously, "the brother-in-law of the Biddles."

"His connections I care little about," said Kate: "I cannot be forced into any association with *them;* but when I recollect all the circumstances of the case — when I recollect the deception he has practised — the heartless cruelty to my father, and above all ——"

"That Charles Somerford is alive, and in England, Kate," said Edward.

"I admit, Edward," said Mrs. Apperton, "that the return of Charles, at the crisis when it occurred, adds to the severity of my trial; but I know my duty, and shall do it. I have no fear of swerving from the path which religion and morality prescribe for me; and I declare, that if, hav-

ing chosen Apperton, he had maintained honestly the character which I thought him to possess, when I accepted his offer; if he had not so early thrown off the mask, and developed his baseness and selfishness, added to that, which women most of all abhor, meanness of spirit, I would have been his affectionate, faithful wife throughout my existence, and have fulfilled every duty with the strictest punctuality and care; but as it is, were Somerford away — dead, and no contrast constantly placed before my eyes, I could not have endured the man to whom I am so unhappily united. No, Edward, there must be grounds sufficient, if not in law, at least in justice and reason, why I should separate from one who has conducted himself as he has done."

"You will find it a difficult case if he insists upon your remaining with him," said Edward; "he has been unfortunate — he has gambled deeply — he has lost; his manners are uncourteous, his selfishness evident, and his great design in his connection with you made clear to *us*; but still you are his wife, and may not quit him for any of these causes. If every wife were able to part from her husband upon similar grounds, the number of single gentlemen would be prodigiously increased within the bills of mortality."

"That event must be looked to, when the time arrives," said Kate; "at present we have other things to occupy our minds. My father endeavours at an arrangement with his creditors, and ascertaining the amount of his involvements, for no man knows less of his affairs than he does at this moment. Such implicit confidence surely never was reposed by one man in another's honour as that which my father placed in Apperton. I am quite happy that our excellent friend Hanningham is going to England — he is an active and intelligent man of business, and may perhaps relieve our minds from the dreadful suspense in which we exist."

"The consequence of which will be," said Edward, "that I shall never see you here again, but be left, like another Robinson Crusoe, on the desert island; for when you and the Hanninghams are gone, desert it will be to me."

"But with Maria?" said Katherine.

"It would be paradise!" exclaimed Edward.

"Who knows," said Mrs. Apperton, "but your friends may become acquainted with her in England, and bring her back to bless your hopes and wishes."

"Impossible, I fear," said Edward; — "however, as I am compelled to wait, I must lay in a fresh stock of patience, apply myself to business, and endeavour to occupy my mind with busier matters than love, and the bright dream of bliss which once filled my mind."

"When Jane Epsworth was the object," said Kate.

"Jane Epsworth never *was* the object," replied Edward; "and amongst all our misfortunes, it is some comfort to reflect upon that escape. To have been sacrificed for her fortune ——"

"Which," interrupted Katherine, "would in all probability have been sacrificed in the general wreck."

"Ay, indeed," cried Edward, "most probably — any way, then, that was an escape."

"And even *that*," said Kate, "would have been a princely match compared with a connection with your beautiful Maria."

"Impossible," exclaimed Edward — "so angelic a creature as that!"

"Come, come," said Mrs. Apperton, "no raptures. I repeat to you, the difficulties in your way would in most cases be insurmountable. Trust to me, and if I am right in my views, I think much may be done in the way of soothing angry feelings, and overcoming alarming difficulties; but you must be patient, and above all things quiet."

"No fisherman," said Edward, "can be found more patient, no fish more mute, than I — and ——"

"Then now begin your probation," said Kate, "for here is company."

As the elder Maxwell entered the room, he cast a glance at his children, which spoke volumes. There were strangers present, and he could say nothing; but he felt assured that Katherine had in some degree betrayed the confidence he had reposed in her, if confidence that could be called which amounted to little else than a regular admission that her sus-

picions with regard to the incognita had some foundation. The storm which gathered on his brow was not soon to be allayed, and, as usual, whenever he suspected the subject which he appeared to dread so much had been discussed or even remotely alluded to by his daughter, he appeared perfectly absorbed in his own reflections during the whole of the dinner, which almost immediately succeeded his entrance into the drawing-room; and no sooner was the repast over, and he could decently quit the party, than he sought and found Katherine, whose assertion of her innocence appeared to have less weight with him than usual. He knew how much she could tell, and of how much importance it was for Edward to know that much, and he repented bitterly that thus, a second time, he had gratuitously and needlessly made her a confidante. His cross-examination of Edward, who really knew nothing, and moreover appeared not to have the slightest suspicion of any of the facts of the case, set his mind at rest; and when he rejoined the party with his children, his manners resumed their suavity, and his conversation that liveliness which even his misfortunes had not been powerful enough to destroy.

Upon Edward, however, the approaching separation of the following day had a considerable effect. He had in fact never been parted from his family; and although he was, as he could not fail to be, extremely popular in the place which he inhabited, he felt, that when his father and sister were gone, he should have nobody to refer to — nobody to consult — nobody to speak to in the way in which dear and near relations can alone converse, when some common interest binds them, and when habitual intercourse has so united the taste and feeling, that a sympathy is ensured, which, amongst strangers or ordinary acquaintance, cannot be expected to exist. However, considering what the wreck of his hopes and expectations had been, he had no right to complain; but still the very responsibility of situation, which would naturally devolve upon him so soon as his colleague in business should depart, added in some degree to the embarrassment of his position.

The morning arrived which was to divide the united

family. Hanningham and Edward Maxwell passed the early part of the day arranging papers and balancing accounts. There were large consignments to be made to Calcutta, Madras, Ceylon, and even New South Wales, all under the care and inspection of Edward; bills of exchange to be drawn, entries to be made, letters to be written. There was scarcely any part of the habitable globe in which business was not to be done, or for which shipments were not to be effected; but throughout the whole morning, Hanningham made no mention about Mr. Wilson, the agent at Fayal. It was natural, perhaps, that he should not mention an agent at so small and insignificant a place, and it seemed very unnatural that such a house should have such a person at such a place; but as he felt the agency to be of such importance that he had actually freighted a vessel himself to take the unusual course which he desired to take, and as he was about to double the distance to England, and, as has already been shown, more than double the length of the voyage, by visiting Fayal, it seemed stranger than his doing all this, that he did not make some observation to his partner upon the main object of his pursuit in going thither. Maxwell could not understand it, nor could he let the subject pass away without once more evincing what he considered a proper and just regard for the firm, by specially enquiring what was to be done with the Fayal agency, and whether he was to expect any consignments from Villa da Horta, or to make any to that place.

"Maxwell," said Hanningham, "I am not surprised at your question; it shows better than mere curiosity, it exhibits a proper solicitude for the concern in which we are engaged. Partners in trade ought to have no secrets, but I admit I have one; and the agency at Fayal involves it. You will have no consignments from that island, nor do I wish you should. You will have no consignments to make thither, for I take thither two pipes of 'London Particular' myself—the accounts of that agency are peculiarly my care, and strictly private."

"My dear Hanningham," said Maxwell, "say not another word. I only mentioned the thing as a matter of business — of course make your arrangements; I can have

nothing to do with it. I merely enquired because I thought you might have some order to give which had escaped your memory."

"No, no," said Hanningham, "it scarcely is possible that any thing connected with that concern should escape my memory. When we return I shall perhaps have less difficulty in explaining the state of the case; at present you may trust me, that nothing which is going on in that island shall ever interfere with the character and respectability of our firm here."

It was clear that the speculation, however unimportant the scene of its operation, was one of no trifling nature; and Maxwell, who naturally bowed to the superior skill and judgment of the senior partner, felt perfectly satisfied of the activity and integrity of Hanningham. If he had known all that related to the proceedings to which Hanningham alluded, he might indeed have felt some difficulty — but that was not to be.

To Katherine the having her affectionate friend Mrs. Hanningham with her, was a great relief; and, besides the whole arrangement of the vessel and the attendants for the voyage were so different from those under which she suffered during the passage out, that it appeared by comparison a party of pleasure. The vessel was an English brig, American-built, with ample accommodation, an intelligent captain, a smart crew, comfortable cabins, and excellent stock: the wind was fair, she rode at a single anchor, and before the voyagers there were hopes, expectations, and anticipations of the most exciting nature; and as to separation, seeing that one only was to be left behind, and four to go, if the grief at parting was equitably divided, Edward himself bore four times as much of the sufferings as either of the individuals who quitted him.

Mrs. Hanningham, who had never been in London, having been married from the country, looked forward to her visit to the metropolis, and after that to her family, with the most agreeable anxiety; Maxwell was all tremor and trepidation until he ascertained the state of his affairs at home; Katherine was all solicitude until she discovered the truth or falsehood of the reports concerning Apperton's

death; and Hanningham, who appeared, if possible, more deeply interested than any of the party, was dying of impatience until he saw the agent who was established at Fayal.

At twelve o'clock the party embarked on board the good brig Rover; and after they had taken an affectionate leave of Maxwell, the yards were squared, and away she went. Edward watched her intently until she became an indistinct speck on the horizon, and having performed this last sad duty to his departing connections and friends, returned to the large and lonesome house of which he now remained the absolute master and possessor.

It was dull work for him, and he felt more desolate than he ever yet had felt in his life: he walked out, paced the prado, inhaled the fragrance of the flowering trees with which it is lined, strolled again to the sea, and at last accepted an invitation to supper with a brother merchant, who, anticipating the dulness he must naturally feel immediately after losing his friends, had hunted him out for the purpose of bidding him to his hospitable board.

It seems wicked to leave the poor young man in this state, but the attention of the reader is wanted elsewhere; and as events are likely to accumulate at this period of our history, we must follow the example of the Maxwells and Hanninghams, and for the present quit the beautiful and salubrious island of Madeira.

CHAPTER IV.

——— There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.

SHAKSPEARE.

WHILE the literature of the present day possesses so many powerful artists in the nautical school, and when Tales of the Sea of the best sort abound, it would be idle for a landsman, who has scarcely dipped his wings in the ocean, to attempt a detail of the eccentric voyage undertaken by

Maxwell and his daughter, and Hanningham and his wife. There was evidently some important object to gain by their peculiar, and by no means agreeable, deviation from the ordinary routine of voyages; and while they are living upon hopes, whatever their nature may be, and looking forward to something, whatever it is, I shall endeavour to recall the attention of the reader to Major Charles Somerford and the Lady Emily Denham, who, whatever the said reader may think, appear to have brought themselves, or to have been brought, into a situation of some difficulty and much delicacy.

A London belle, who, during the season, every night in the week (Sundays not excepted), flutters through the round — some call it gay — of society, indulges at times in harmless flirtations, ventures to be extremely kind and smiling to some devoted swain, plays herself off for the evening, and then lays aside her feelings towards him, and even her recollection of him, with her *boa*, and would as willingly consign the dandy as the tippet to the *surveillance* and keeping of her maid. The repetition of this sort of display increases perhaps the reputation of the young lady for heart-killing, but it proportionably diminishes the naturalness and sensibility of her own character. She becomes almost an actress in the scene around her; and, like an actress, learns to ridicule the best feelings of our hearts, and sneer at the best sentiments of our nature. Yet there *are* moments in the midst of all the glare of light, the fragrance of flowers, the crash of music to the bounding of feet, when even *she* feels; but when she does, she is acted upon by the recollection of other and different scenes and circumstances — by the remembrance of hours differently spent, and a recurrence to pursuits more congenial to her heart and mind, than the brilliant, boisterous tumult which surrounds her.

There are, indeed, those who affect to despise every thing like nature, and who pass their days in the country precisely as they pass their time in London; and who, like Lady Townly in the play, laugh at rurality, and shudder at the notion of an old tree. But this *is* affectation — they know better, and their feelings and tastes are better; but,

living in awe of ridicule, this scorn of every thing divested of art is only a practical illustration of the whole scheme of artificiality. Lady Emily Denham was one of those few persons who venture to think for themselves — she was quiet, retiring, and unassuming; she was told it was necessary to undergo a certain probation in the fashionable world, and that the noviciate must be performed; and so she underwent it. But shame to her taste be it said, she did not like the gaiety with which she was surrounded; and, perhaps, acted upon, by the delicacy of her constitution, shrank from the hurly-burly of society, and gladly subsided into the quietude of her grandfather's temporary residence at Cheltenham.

There are circumstances in the world which fall out most extraordinarily, or, as Godfrey Moss would have called them, "*curos coincidences;*" and one of those was the coincidence of Major Somerford's arrival at Cheltenham, and introduction to Lady Emily's retirement, just at the moment that she had dropped, as it were, from the Eldorado Mountains of Almack's into the "peaceful vale" of Lord Lessingham's villa.

I should insult the perceptive faculties of my reader, were I to dilate, for a moment, upon the peculiar effect of juxta-position in a country house. In London, people meet, and talk, and flirt, and dance, order their carriages, and go home; they meet again perhaps to-morrow, perhaps not, although London society runs a good deal in what are conventionally, perhaps correctly, called *Clicks*. But they meet, dressed out in the trickeries of the world, upon the *qui vive* for gaiety, and eager for display. In all general assemblies, the love of ridiculing every body not immediately belonging to ourselves excites a spirit of conversation which may evince the quality of the mind, but with which the heart has nothing to do. It is all flutter, and restlessness, and envy, and jealousy; and so as the point is made to please the ear, the friend who is beyond the reach of *words* must be content to be sacrificed upon the altar of her who listens. The *revanche*, however, is easy, and most generally played off. And thus, if all that is said in an assembly could be said in detail, so that every

body present should hear it, the only question that would arise, would be, When will this party meet again?

But in the country — oh! those places to look at — the drives in the neighbourhood — the excursions — the wet mornings in the house — the music — the writing out *this*, and the reading out *that*, and the constant lingerings and loitering, and the social evenings, and the harp, and the chess, and the *ecarté*, and all the other things contrived for people in pairs. Living in a country house bears the same relation to living in London, that sitting down to dinner bears to sitting down to supper — a round table that will scarcely hold twelve people at dinner, will conveniently accommodate eighteen at supper — the reason appearing the same as that which one can give for the more social manners of a country house compared with those of town. Habit and association make people more natural. The most consummate coxcomb living cannot always play the game; he *must* relax, and sooner or later does, if you keep him always in view. Let him once out of your sight, and he takes in a new stock of affectation to begin again. The fresh and somewhat humid air of the country takes the starch out of stiff people, and some influence, perhaps as genial, operates in a similar way upon them, later in the evening. Moore might be quoted advantageously here; his "Fly not yet," expresses it all: but I must not dwell too long on a dissertation which has only for its object to show how very important the arrival of Major Somerford at Lord Lessingham's actually was; happening as it did at the precise juncture of time, at which Lady Emily had retired from the gaieties of London.

The worst of these country affairs is, that without meaning any thing in the outset, they are sure to come to something in the end; a difficulty to which London matters are not so subject; and certain it is, that although Somerford was a remarkably good-looking person, with most agreeable manners, and, moreover, highly accomplished, he might, with all that, have squeezed into rooms, and flourished round them in a waltz, or scuffled across them in a gallope every night, during a long season in town, and Lady Emily would never have seen, or perhaps if seen, never have no-

ticed, or if ever noticed, never have remembered him for an hour; but at Lord Lessingham's, her mind attuned to sentiment by illness, her heart naturally kind and affectionate, giratified by the deference and attention of her father's guest, she felt an immediate prepossession for Charles, whose manner, subdued by his own anxiety concerning Katherine, was gentler than perhaps it would otherwise have been, and gave an idea of depth of feeling very justly as to the fact, but sadly erroneous as to the object by which it was excited.

In short, the rural system which I have endeavoured faintly to sketch was in full play at Lord Lessingham's; and Lady Emily, wholly unconscious of the existence of Somerford's first love, became seriously and deeply attached to him, without being in the slightest degree conscious of the fact. She felt, however, sensible that there was a sort of coldness and shiness in his manner towards her when they were together alone, which did not indicate a reciprocity of feeling; but this she attributed to the diffidence of a young man, who naturally must think that his engaging the affections of so near a relative of such a person as Lord Lessingham was but an ungracious repayment of the kindness and condescension which had been shown him by his lordship during the period of their acquaintance.

A few days only had elapsed after the occurrence of the very embarrassing *scene* with which this volume opens, when Lord Lessingham recurred to the subject of Charles's intimacy in his family, in a manner which indicated the depth of interest with which he regarded the circumstances connected with it.

"Somerford," said his Lordship, "I am aware of the embarrassment under which you labour while in the society of my excellent Emily. I know too much of the world, and am too quick an observer of the workings of human nature, not to be perfectly conscious of the change which has taken place in your manner within these few days. I admit it to be natural, and I regard the alteration as a proof of your solicitude for the happiness of persons who feel the sincerest interest for you."

"I am not aware——" said Somerford.

"Yes, Charles, you are," interrupted his lordship. "I speak to you in confidence, and I appeal to the best feelings of your nature: you feel a growing affection for Emily—you are conscious that persons in my station in society expect, in a marriage for their children—and I consider Emily exactly as if she were my own daughter—certain essentials, as they are considered, which it has not pleased fortune to bestow upon you; you therefore honourably check your natural impulse to admire my child, and with a chivalrous resolution endeavour to break the bonds which you find closing round you."

"I trust, my lord," said Somerford, "that be my feelings what they may, I shall never prove unworthy of the confidence you have reposed in me, nor repay such goodness as I have received at your lordship's hands, by alienating the affections of a beloved relation from those who have a right to claim them."

"I know your motive, sir," said his lordship (which by the by he did not), "I appreciate your conduct; but I shall be candid with you, and tell you that *I* feel very differently, upon matters in which the heart is concerned, from many of my contemporaries and connections. To force the inclinations of a young woman, and bid her drive from her heart and mind, an object to whom she is devotedly attached, is to command a being we love to be miserable for life. It may be said, that there *are* cases where such interference and such decision may be necessary to save a thoughtless girl from endless wretchedness, which might attend her marriage with some base and unworthy individual; and so it is, where the mind and character and principles are light, uncultivated, and ill-regulated; but in a case like Emily's, no such necessity for coercion exists; a being like her, can never be won by that, which is not itself estimable and amiable."

Somerford, who felt that the conversation was taking not only a very important, but unexpected turn, was conscious of blushing—a failing not much in fashion in these days.

"Emily," said Lord Lessingham, "has seen the gaiety of a London season, at least the greater part of one; she retires from that gaiety to the quietude and seclusion of this

retreat; she becomes acquainted with an estimable, amiable man, and — why should I conceal it from you? — she gives him her heart."

"Yes, my lord," said Somerford, trembling at the case which his lordship was putting hypothetically.

"Can *you* blame her?" said his lordship, "I cannot; for if blame is attachable any where, it is to him who is her guardian and protector. If he had considered a serious termination to their acquaintance not desirable, he should have checked the intimacy which he must have seen increasing, and separated those who were gradually growing more essential to each other's happiness."

Somerford tried to speak, but Lord Lessingham continued.

"Placed as you are in the world," said his lordship, "a soldier of fortune — which means, in fact, of no fortune — I can easily enter into those feelings, the workings of which I have attentively watched, since Emily, who has confided to me the history of your late interview with her, had perhaps inadvertently betrayed the real state of her heart. It is my joyous task, Somerford, to relieve the embarrassment you feel, and release your affections from the thraldom to which you think them doomed, and to tell you that I place my grandchild's happiness beyond all other considerations, and accept you as her suitor with pride and pleasure."

To describe Somerford's feelings at this extraordinary declaration of Lord Lessingham's views and intentions would be impossible — to be conscious that he was loaded with his lordship's praise for sacrificing his affection for Lady Emily to a sense of honour and delicacy, when in fact it was to duty and love for another; and to find himself offered beauty, wealth, rank, accomplishments, excellence of temper, fascination of manners, all his own; and with nothing to bring forward in opposition to these, but hopeless love for the daughter of a man in middling life, ruined in circumstances, and an exile from his country; that daughter having broken her faith to *him*, and married a rival in all respects his inferior. — What a situation!

But add to this, a more enchaining claim upon his heart. He knew that he was beloved by the fascinating creature whom he might now possess — the fact of her attachment

formed the very basis of the present negotiation — what a conflict of passion and feeling did this combination of circumstances raise in his heart and mind!

As for Lord Lessingham, who, instead of seeing his young friend start from his seat, burst into an ecstasy, and pour forth a torrent of gratitude, delight, rapture, and exultation, saw him fixed like a statue, pale and trembling with agitation; he scarcely believed the evidence of his own senses.

"My lord," said Somerford, after a pause, and so soon as he could give utterance to words, "if I permitted myself to accept the praise which your lordship has been pleased to bestow upon my feelings and conduct towards Lady Emily, I should be the basest of human beings. I take no credit for any of the delicacy for which you so much extol me. I admit, that I did perceive — for mercy's sake do not attribute what I say to vanity — I did perceive that Lady Emily — felt — a prepossession in my favour — I saw, too, the impropriety, the infamy on my part, of encouraging that prepossession; and it was my intention, after gradually diminishing the length of my visits here, to have withdrawn myself altogether; a course I considered more expedient for many reasons, than that of hastily and decidedly breaking off our connection. Amongst those reasons, was a desire not to excite in your lordship's mind an idea that I felt myself — perhaps after all erroneously — an object of too much interest to your charming grand-daughter; and a wish, for all our sakes, to separate so as to create no remark or observation amongst the idle gossipers of this busy watering-place, where persons in your lordship's rank of life, and all your actions — or supposed actions — form the universal topic of conversation for your inferiors."

"Whether, my dear Somerford," said Lord Lessingham, "you take credit for fine feeling or not, it must have been an honourable feeling which induced you to think of quitting a being who is devoted to you, and for whom you cannot fail to feel a corresponding esteem. Surely, what I have now said, the friendship I have now evinced, and the confidence I have now made, render your else wise and generous plan utterly needless."

Still Somerford remained motionless — Lord Lessingham's surprise seemed curdling into anger.

"Am I to understand, Major Somerford," said his lordship, "that my proposition is rejected?"

"My lord," said Somerford, "the situation in which I am placed is painful, agonising beyond description. I admit all my faults — I feel the debt of gratitude I owe to Lady Emily and to you; but I ought even earlier to have explained — my affections are engaged — and it was upon that consciousness I felt it my duty, the moment I suspected myself to be too favourably considered by Lady Emily, to withdraw. To the conviction that I ought not for a moment to encourage her prepossession, after I had ascertained it, are attributable the reserve and embarrassment for which your lordship kindly sought another and perhaps a nobler motive. It was to prevent your lordship's suspecting, what I apprehended to be Lady Emily's too partial regard for me, that I determined gradually to quit your family; but now, since our separation becomes a matter of course, I have no hesitation in avowing, that my heart is not my own to give."

"Do you refer in this affair to the daughter of Maxwell, the surgeon?" said his lordship, to the infinite amazement of Somerford, who was not prepared for his knowledge even of the name of Katherine's father. "If you do," continued his lordship, assuming himself to be in the right from Charles's silence, and the acquiescent expression of his countenance, "surely you should consider the nature of the engagement, to which you voluntarily pledge yourself. The lady is the wife of another man — which man she married while you considered her under an engagement to *you* — is this not the case?"

"It certainly is, my lord," said Somerford, "and you will no doubt consider it weak in me to nurture a passion, which circumstances have rendered perhaps hopeless."

"Less weak than wicked, in my mind," said Lord Lessingham, "is an engagement of such a nature. The anxiety necessarily implied for the death of another human being, whom the fickleness of the lady herself has interposed between you and what you consider your happiness,

seems to me to be wholly incompatible with the feelings you have so uniformly expressed on all other subjects, and your possession of which, has been accounted by me of greater value than worldly fortune — however, every man judges for himself."

"Let me pray your lordship not to decide harshly against her," said Charles; "the lady with whose history and circumstances you seem acquainted, was the playmate of my youth, my friend, my first, my only love — her acceptance of her present husband was procured by misrepresentation, and her fidelity was assailed by allegations made against mine."

"Exactly so," said Lord Lessingham; "made by her father, who had fallen into ruin, by connecting himself in gambling speculations with the man to whom he has sacrificed his child. At all events, they are married, and you resign a certainty of happiness with an exemplary lady, who is devoted to you, and who — forgive me for saying so much, upon a subject on which I generally say so little — would, without disparagement to your respectability, place you in a sphere of life which could not fail to be desirable to you. Emily is my heiress; to *her* descends not only my fortune but my title — from her it devolves upon her eldest son, if she have a family: these are advantages which in a worldly point of view might ——"

"Oh, my lord," interrupted Charles, "I know your heart and feelings too well, to think for a moment that you appreciate worldly advantages more highly than feelings of honour and rectitude; and I am sure that you know enough of me to know that I am not likely to be swayed by those advantages, in a decision on such a subject as this. For herself alone, untitled and undowered, I should adore Lady Emily; her happiness would be the sole object of my existence, and I should never have been sufficiently grateful for her kindness — but, my lord, I stand pledged ——"

"To a married woman, Mr. Somerford," said his lordship, "who, as I have already said, is married, because under the delusions practised by her respectable parent she has played you false. Think of this again, and ask your proud heart whether the treatment you have received at

Maxwell's hands throughout your life is such as to render an intimate connection with his family so very desirable. His pride, Major Somerford, tore you from his daughter when *he* was affluent and prosperous, and *you* were poor and friendless — he banished you, to avoid the connection — he deluded his child into forgetting you. You return — he is ruined — and now he seeks to renew an acquaintance with the thriving Major Somerford, that he disdained to continue with the friendless ensign, the son of his ancient friend and associate."

"My lord," said Somerford, "where have you, thus, become acquainted with the particulars of my early life and connection with Mr. Maxwell?"

"From an authentic source," said his lordship; "and although the kindness of the family was evinced towards your mother on her death-bed, you, perhaps, were too young to feel the neglects and insults she suffered on account of her doubtful origin. These facts I know, and I tell them to you, because I would open your eyes to the false delusion of dragging on a life of anxiety in the hope of obtaining the equivocal gratification of marrying a woman who has deceived you, and of rejecting a proposition which, while it rendered you truly happy and respectable, would secure the comfort of a lovely and amiable girl, and make her grandfather the happiest man in the universe."

This torrent of language which flowed from the old lord's lips, while his eyes sparkled with fresh animation, completely overcame Edward; the effect was, as his lordship meant it to be—staggering. It was clear that the venerable nobleman was vitally interested in the success of what might almost be called his offer to Somerford; nor was this anxiety rendered the less remarkable by the intimate knowledge which he appeared to have gained of Somerford's connections and pursuits, and the display made of that knowledge for the purpose, as it should seem, of magnifying the favour he sought to bestow, and of putting his young friend quite at his ease as to any thing like a want of candour which he might have felt himself guilty of exhibiting during the preceding part of his intimacy with Lady Emily.

Whether it was, that the arguments and appeals of Lord Lessingham (and he had stricken one chord which required only a slight touch to make it vibrate through his young hearer's heart — the indignity offered to his late mother) had actually shaken Charles Somerford's determination and fidelity towards Katherine, it is now not quite possible to say; but certain it is, that he could not maintain the decisive tone which, in the earlier part of this very singular dialogue, he had assumed; this, indeed, might be owing to the appearance of a growing violence on the part of Lord Lessingham, who seemed to feel more angry at Somerford's stanch adherence to the Maxwell family, than at his insensibility to the great advantages derivable by him, from abandoning them; it was, as a matter of taste, repugnant to his feelings, and he was literally irritated in a high degree at what appeared rather the obstinacy than the blindness of the devoted lover of the stockholder's wedded wife.

Under the circumstances, Somerford thought it better and more respectful, to beat a retreat, and thus avoid the decisive answer which his noble friend and patron seemed perfectly resolved to extract from him on the spot.

"My lord," said he, rising from his chair, "I feel myself incapable of maintaining this discussion — indeed — indeed, I am so deeply interested — so overcome by the conflicting sentiments which agitate me, that I am sure it will be better for me — for your lordship — for all of us, that I should leave you now; in the morning you shall hear from me: and assure yourself of this, that whatever course reflection may induce me to pursue, I never can entertain a sentiment of feeling towards your lordship and the excellent Lady Emily that is not of the most grateful and the tenderest nature."

"I believe you are right, Charles," said Lord Lessingham; "we are too much excited to be quite reasonable. If I have said any thing which annoys you, with respect to the family to which it is quite clear you are still attached, attribute it only to an anxiety to disentangle you from an engagement which is neither desirable nor respectable. Believe me when I tell you, as I look at it, that

every thing of importance connected with your future career depends upon your dissolving what I cannot but consider the criminal contract into which you have entered with Mrs. Apperton."

"There is one point, my lord," said Somerford, still mindful of Katherine's character and respectability, "upon which, let what may happen, I must disabuse your mind — let my devotion to Mrs. Apperton be what it may, or my determination to devote myself either to her, or to a life of single unblessedness, she is no party to the compact."

"Worse and worse," said his lordship; "then, perhaps, if she gets rid of what she evidently now considers an incumbrance, she may, to suit her own fancy, or to ameliorate her exemplary father's circumstances, play you a second trick of frivolity and fickleness, which, after the success of the first, and your humility under your sufferings, seems the most natural course in the world for her to pursue."

"I see, my lord," said Charles, "your lordship is too much prejudiced against my friends to listen with patience to any exculpation of them, and I ——"

"Friends! Major Somerford," said Lord Lessingham; "believe those to be your friends who sacrifice every thing for your sake — believe him to be your friend who seeks an alliance with you, not him who condemns it — believe him to be your friend who offers you a being all singleness of heart, all purity of mind, whose first affections are fixed on you — believe him to be your friend who first entreats and then warns you; the prize is at your foot, reject it, and your loss is incalculably great. I speak, perhaps, in parables, but I know the truth of what I say. Go — decision upon this point makes or mars you eternally. And this I tell you, that you may safely believe, no man living is more disinterestedly interested in your fate than I am."

"Assure yourself, my lord," said Charles, "that my gratitude must be unbounded for all the kindness I have received under this hospitable roof. You shall hear from me in the morning. I can better explain myself in writing, and ——"

"I seek no explanation," said Lord Lessingham; "you must, of course, follow the impulse of your own feelings and affections; think of my advice—remember my warning—and be assured, let your course be what it may, you can never cease to be an object of vital interest to me."

Saying this, he extended his hand to Somerford, who pressed it fervently and affectionately; the look which the venerable nobleman gave Charles as they parted, was one, the expression of which it would be difficult to describe, but which was indelibly imprinted on the heart of him on whom it fell.

Thus terminated the conversation—and what were the feelings it excited in the mind of the faithful Charles? It was too true that there could be no comparison between the persons submitted to his choice; all that Lord Lessingham had said on the subject was incontrovertible. On the one hand, youth, beauty, rank, wealth, and honours, awaited him; on the other, none of these, for Kate's youth was past, and with it had flown most of her beauty; to rank she had no pretensions, and the wealth she might have expected, had vanished; but more than this, as his lordship said, she had proved herself false and fickle, and had, even upon her own admission, consented to a marriage of convenience, and accepted a man, convinced, at the moment she did so, that he never could make her happiness.

Is there any such thing as accounting for the freaks of love—for the extraordinary, out-of-the-way proceedings of those who are under its influence? But even these eccentricities, which every body is ready to admit, seemed sober sadnesses compared with the conduct of Lord Lessingham himself, who, reserved and mindful of his dignity and station as he was, seemed to have stepped from his pedestal to volunteer an offer of his grand-daughter to a military officer of small fortune and no family; and that he was quite aware of the very obscure origin of Charles's extraction, no doubt could remain, after his avowal of an intimate knowledge of all the proceedings of Somerford's early life, and his declared familiarity with the whole volume of *Maxwelliana*, in which he had been concerned.

Somerford saw, in all the liberality and readiness of his lordship, an amiable desire to sacrifice every thing for the insurance of his grand-daughter's happiness, and he felt duly the dignity of being not only "father-in-law," but actually father to the "three-tailed bashaw," in the shape of Baron Lessingham, who might hereafter be born; but it was love, not love of gain, that would cement this union; a proper relative equality of age, a similarity of habits and pursuits, were the enchaining and enchanting inducements —in short, a pure and generous affection, totally unlike the feeling in which are founded those "negotiation matches," which sometimes take place, and which are scarcely less disgusting in the woman than degrading to the man.

When Charles began to recapitulate to himself all the advantages derivable from this connection, he marvelled greatly at the excess of good fortune which awaited him, and at the extraordinary condescension which marked the conduct of the old lord; but could he relinquish all his hopes of Kate — of *her*, who for years had been the bright leading star of his destiny? — of her, whose image had visited his night dreams, and the recollection of whom had occupied his waking thoughts? It seemed impossible! yet, nevertheless, he could not but admit, to a certain, and no very inconsiderable extent, the justice of Lord Lessingham's comments and observations upon the folly, if not the immorality, of doing what the vulgar call "waiting for dead men's shoes." It was clear that the crisis of his fate was at hand, and that a prompt and immediate decision was necessary. "Two heads," thought Charles, "are better than one;" and so in every case, except that of a bicephalous infant, they may be; and accordingly he proceeded straight from the noble lord's residence to the boarding-house where his fellow-voyager, Mr. Macleod, the Honourable East India Company's Secretary in the Twankey-twaddle department, was residing. He found the nabob on the point of retiring to rest, but he stayed his progress to his bedchamber; and having planted him, in his morning gown as he was, (which, by the way, looked like half an old japan screen,) in his armed chair, detailed to him the whole progress of the intimacy which he must

have partly suspected during his occasional visits at Lord Lessingham's, concluding the history with an almost verbatim repetition of the very interesting and important conversation between himself and his lordship, which had so recently terminated.

"You ask my advice, majorr," said Macleod; "d'ye want ony advice on sich a pint?" (I consider it right to print Mr. Macleod's words as he thought it right to pronounce them.) "Can ye have a daut apaun sich a pint, majorr? Ye must murry my Lady Emily of carse."

"And so forfeit my pledge to Mrs. Apperton," said Charles.

"Your pledge, majorr!" said Macleod: "why, surr, she's murried already, what more woud she have? Besides, 'spose, sir, she's a wuddy, wot then? She has no fortun' — not a farden. No, no, she fuggut you, when ye ware out of hare sight, why, in the divil's name, shou'd you be so partiklar abut her — eh, majorr?"

"Why, Mr. Macleod," said Charles, "she was deceived into the marriage to which she consented."

"Deceived, was she?" said the nabob; "well then, there's nothing whatever like deception in the uffer of Lord Lessingham — there's a beautiful bibi saab, Lady Emily, the grand-daughter of a Burrah saab like my lord, with a tittle into the burgain. I only wush I had the reversion of the offer, majorr."

"As a matter of feeling, I really cannot give up my old prepossession," said Somerford; "and yet how very advantageous is the prospect which the union with Lady Emily would open to me."

"Advantageous prospect," said Macleod; "the view from a hill furt is a fool to them — runk and dagnity buth at your feet. Why, even to me, a senior merchant in the Hunnurable Ist Ingy Company's suvvice, late secretary in the Twanky-twaddle department, and eligible for a sit in cuncil — even I — I tell you so — should jump at the chance of sich an acquisition."

"But you would not feel so, if your first love still haunted you, Mr. Macleod," said Charles, endeavouring to excite the nabob to sentimentality.

"Fust love, sir!" said Macleod; "wat, in the divil's name, has fust love to do with it? — *my* fust love was a littel cobbling shumaker's daughter in Hedge Lane, Lunnun. I fancied her perfection — I was sixteen years uld at the tim, and I dremt of her by night, and thowt of her by day, and sighed for her, and watched for her both day and night; — a pretty mess I'd have made if I had thowt it necessary to murry Miss Caroline Wagstaffe on my return to England — senior merchant in the Hunnurable Ist Ingy Company's suvvice, and eligible for a sit in cuncil — because she happened to be my fust love."

"I admit a peculiarity of feeling upon the point," said Charles.

"My dear friend," said Macleod, "putting the rank and fortune wlully out of the question — only luck at Lady Emily's person and accomplishments — luck at her eyes — demants; luck at her lips — churries; luck at her tith — purrls — and a figgur entire semetry — perfection by Jooputur."

"I admit her charms — I ——"

"And as for Mussus Apperton, you know I saw her at Brighton — she's leddy like, I grunt, but *passée* surely — fine expression of countenance, good eyes and tith, I grunt; but dear me, such a defference in manner. Lady Emily is so delicate — so trunsparent — so sulph-like — I declare to Gud she's puffect, entirely puffect — that's my view o' the case."

"Then you think," said Charles, "that falsehood to Katherine would be a venial crime."

"Falsehood, majorr!" exclaimed the yellow chief, "she's murried, I tell ye — she's suttled — she has chosen a spouse, and there an end — it's absolutely criminal to bind yourself to one whose hand and heart I hopp are entirely another's. Take my advice, accept with grutitude the uffer of Lord Lessingham, and become the sire of a race of lords yourself."

"I will consider the case on my pillow," said Charles. "I sincerely thank you for your advice."

"Which, if it perfectly coincides with your own feelings, you will follow," said Macleod; "my opinion is like

that of a cuncil in one of our Istern cullunies, where the membirs say their say, and the governor does his do; if their nutiuns agree, well and gudd; if they dunt, the cuncil are at liberty to protest, but the governor's measure is carried — eh, majorr?"

"Not so," said Somerford: "I will carefully consider the bearings of this extraordinary affair; for I honestly tell you, that so much of happiness as is here presented for my acceptance is enough to startle the firmest heart. Assure yourself of one thing, Mr. Macleod," continued he, "that I am not selfish; and that, whatever decision I may come to, on this point, I shall be governed by motives which you will not, I am sure, fail to approve."

"I have no doubt, my dear majorr," said Macleod, "not in the lest; but, I would just have you put the case fairly and duspassionately, as I did in the memorable time when I was resident at Pallydyneveraram. It cost me nearly two hours, although I was hurried by circumstances, before I resulved upon hanging a rajah, three of his sons, his uncle Bungabyravamy Row, and two of his nevvies; but I did it, and if I had time, I am sure I could make you see that I was governed by motives which *you* could not fail to approve."

"Mine is a less desperate case," said Charles, "so having had the advantage of the opinion of a counsellor ——"

"No — not actually — eligible for a sit in cuncil, I said," interrupted the punctilious prig.

"Eligible for a seat in council," continued Charles; "I beg pardon — I will go to my room; and having put all the circumstances fairly before myself, decide and act upon my decision, whatever it may be, the first thing in the morning. And so good night, sir; with many apologies for detaining you so long on my affairs."

"Nut a wud — nut a wud, my dear majorr," said Macleod. "I have little doubt what will be the result of your deliberation. You'll murry my Lady Emily, and I shall have the happiness of seeing an excellent, worthy, high-spirted young fellow, united to one of the sweetest creechurs that ever I saw in my whull existence, let the cullur be what it might."

The council here broke up. Macleod, convinced that he had overcome all Somerford's scruples about Mrs. Apperton, and Somerford very much puzzled as to the course he ought really to pursue.

During the night, Charles had, as may easily be supposed, but little sleep; yet all the occurrences of the past evening appeared more like a dream than reality. The kindness of Lord Lessingham was *impayable*, the affection of Lady Emily was most flattering; vanity conspired with gratitude, and interest with something very like love, to confuse his ideas, and puzzle his will. Hour passed after hour, and the announcement of each, by the church clock, fell on his ear; nor was it till late that he had come to the decision which he was so soon to announce to the expectant guardian of his lovely prize.

No sooner had he, after weighing the improbability, nay, the almost impossibility, of Kate's ever being his — her fickleness — the duplicity of her father — the slights offered to his mother — his banishment and disgrace in poverty, and his reception on his return in prosperity, with the beauty, wealth, rank, and attachment of the exquisite Lady Emily Denham — no sooner had he made up his mind to the course he should pursue, than he rose from his bed, and enveloping himself in his dressing-gown, proceeded to write that letter to Lord Lessingham, which decided at once the important question.

What the resolution was, to which Major Somerford came at this particular period, the reader unfortunately is not here permitted to ascertain. Circumstances of new and strange interest call his attention from the lodging-house at Cheltenham, to the narrow streets of the city of Villa da Horta, in the fertile island of Fayal.

CHAPTER V.

I have a little villa in the Abruzzo,
A limpid brook waters its verdant meads,
And various scenes of woodland, hill, and dale,
Diversify the beauteous spot, replete
With all that nature uncorrupted wants;
The cleanly mansion in a garden placed,
(Though breathing marble people not its grots,
Nor painted triumphs animate the walls),
Is yet convenient — thither I'll retire. BELLERS.

THERE is scarcely any part of the world, at the same distance from town, so little known as the Western Islands, to one of which our friends from Madeira have been voyaging during the digression into which I have wandered. On the score of precedence, they might claim more attention than most colonies, since they were discovered in the year 1439, some say, 1460, by Vandeberg, a merchant of Bruges, and were subsequently named, by the Portuguese, *Islas dos Acores*, from the number of hawks by which they were inhabited — *Unde derivatur*, Azores.

The Azores, like the Muses, are nine in number; but of these, three are at a great distance from the rest. The other six form a beautiful and interesting cluster, and the sailor passes, among the group, the gigantic Pico, whose head towers far above the clouds, on his starboard bow, Fayal on his larboard, with St. George's in the distance right a-head; and on his starboard quarter, Terceira, rendered latterly familiar to the ear of patriots and politicians, by the establishment of a certain fantoccini regency in its principal city, Angra.

Katherine watched, with an anxious and scrutinising look, the gradual developement of the features of the scenery, as they neared the land; she saw by degrees the fertile fields of Fayal, distinguished by the hedge-rows which bounded them; and she felt that the face of the country more closely resembled that which of all countries was dearest to her, than any other she had yet visited. It must be owned, that her father, who had taken to navigating somewhat late in life, watched earnestly too; but

with a less philosophical feeling: his anxiety was kept alive, and his interest excited, by a continual apprehension of perils and dangers, which invariably threaten those who approach such a coast as that of Fayal.

But there was yet another passenger, whose mind seemed so totally absorbed by the expectation of what was to occur when they landed, that all surrounding, all passing, objects were unheeded; his eyes were rivetted to the spot, which the master of the vessel told him was Villa da Horta; and as they opened the valley where first the houses of Port Pin present themselves to view, with the high land of St. George's Island beyond, and the brown hill, with its three watch towers, rises to the sight, his heart beat, and tears flowed down his manly cheek. His wife watched with the deepest interest the workings of his countenance. Could Hanningham, the disinterested, generous Hanningham, anticipate a meeting of such extraordinary delight, with an agent of his house? or feel so powerfully the influence of mercantile speculation, as to shed tears as he approached the place of that agent's residence? She had never seen him so moved before; but she respected his feelings, and permitted him to believe she had not witnessed the effect produced upon him.

Before noon, the good brig Rover entered Fayal bay, with a fine breeze from the south-east; and found her way safely to the place of her destination, to the unspeakable joy of the surgeon, whose mind had been filled with certain forebodings and misgivings, touching a hidden danger in the channel between Pico and Fayal, known by the name of Chapman's Rock; a touch on which would, in all probability, have proved fatal to the whole expedition.

On an approach to the harbour of Villa da Horta, the fertile appearance of the country, contrasted with the white towers of the churches and convents, gives a great relief to the eye which has been long wearied with the sameness of the sea; but Katherine, although her experience in Portuguese colonial cities and towns was confined to a knowledge of one of the best of them, Funchal, was sufficiently aware of the real state of things, to feel no great confidence in the luring and tempting aspect of the capital

of Fayal, as viewed from the brig. She was fully prepared for the horrors in which she was so soon to be located; dirt, and filth, and an overwhelming smell of fried oil and garlic; houses like pig-styes, and streets choked with mud, with no scavengers save the pigs themselves, which in this island have long legs and curly tails, and stand nearly twelve hands high; the bullocks rarely exceeding ten. All this, and worse, did Mrs. Apperton compound for; and she could yet scarcely account, in her own mind, for the violent anxiety of Hanningham to get ashore; being assured that he, like herself, must be pretty well prepared for the luxuries of the "flaunting town" of Villa da Horta; and not quite comprehending, although it must be confessed she shrewdly suspected, the cause of his violent anxiety to see Mr. Wilson, his agent, before any others of the party landed.

There are mysteries in all trades; and so it appeared, that the secrets of this agency were of sufficient importance to induce Hanningham to leave his wife and his friends actually prisoners on board the Rover, of which good brig, those friends, including most specially and particularly Mr. Maxwell himself, were heartily sick and tired, while he pulled ashore at the first opportunity. He professed, however, to think, that it would be better to prepare Mr. Wilson for their reception; and if he, as it was most probable, should not have sufficient accommodation for their whole party under his own roof, it would be infinitely wiser to secure lodgings or rooms at some hotel — save the mark! — where they might be sure of a resting place after their fatigue, without having the additional trouble of hunting for it, when they came ashore.

On the approach of the brig, showing her colours, a dirty old ragged union jack was hoisted upon a crooked staff, at the house of the English consul, one Firkins, an antiquated personage, who exhibited himself at the landing-place, in a second-hand coat of a lieutenant of the Navy (a service which he had never disgraced by belonging to it), in order to look in some degree respectable, and, as he thought, consular. Firkins and his family were

treats, and subsequently afforded much amusement to the new arrivals. But of those more anon.

Three hours elapsed after Hanningham's departure, before he returned; but when he did, he gave so favourable an account of his mission, and its success, as amply repaid the anxiety of the passengers on board. He had secured accommodation actually in the house of Mr. Wilson, whom, with his daughter, he had found quite well; a circumstance which appeared to interest him infinitely more than seemed compatible with the relative situation of principal and agent in the wine trade. However, warmth of friendship is no crime; and, extraordinary as was the alteration which had taken place in his spirits and manner since his absence on shore, his wife was delighted to see him happy; and Maxwell and he conversed apart, each smiling and looking as pleased, as if the greatest possible benefit had accrued to them from the result of their voyage.

It was past seven o'clock when the party were safely lodged in the boat which was to convey them to the shore; less than half an hour brought them to the water's edge; when, rather to show his authority than his courtesy, Mr. Consul Firkins was ready to receive the party. He invited them to his house, which lay directly in their road to the residence of Mr. Wilson, a gentleman in whose praise Mr. Firkins was extremely diffuse, seeing that he expected to reap, in the sequel, some benefit from his sycophancy.

Having reached his abode — it being, as it should never be forgotten, Sunday—Firkins insisted upon the whole party walking in, which, as it was impossible to refuse, the party agreed to do; and having been ushered out of the consul's shop and counting-house, — which looked and smelt more like a wet stage coach-office in London, in muddy weather, than any thing else,—into an apartment at the back of the house, something between a barn and a ball-room, the eyes of the visiters were astonished, and their ears astounded, by finding the consul's four unmarried daughters, as ugly as their mother, and almost as vulgar as their father, passing the Sunday evening in waltzing with each other, for the amusement of some nondescript people who were seated round the room.

Only conceive the amazement of Mrs. Apperton and Mrs. Hanningham, when, on addressing these female Yahoos, they discovered that only one of them either spoke or understood English — daughters of an Englishman — who for five and forty years had held the office of British consul. Now really this is too bad: such people as Firkins should be called by some other title. When we recollect that Rome had her consuls, that France had her consuls, and that England has, all over the world, gentlemen and diplomatists in the character of consuls, and then see the same appellation bestowed upon a pig-selling, onion-vending savage, as ignorant of every thing but the art of money-making as a cobbler, and as ravenous after gain as a wolf after sheep, it is actually sickening. It makes one grieve that the Portuguese of Fayal should have seen before their eyes, for almost half a century, such a terrible specimen of ignorance and vulgarity, swaggering about in a tarnished uniform, to which he had no right, as his Britannic Majesty's representative at Villa da Horta — *nommé*, Tom Firkins.

The visit to the consul was as brief as possible, although the visiters could not escape without being dosed with a small glass each of a filthy mixture, mentioned before in these pages, called Fayal wine, not one drop of which grows in Fayal, but is imported from Pico, and there cooked up for the palates of the inhabitants, or sent aboard homeward-bound ships, under the name of Teneriffe, or even Madeira. Maxwell tasted the stuff with suspicious and professional cautiousness; and when it passed his lips, he cast a look at Hanningham, strongly expressive of a feeling, that if Mr. Wilson's agency was in any degree connected with the circulation of that sort of draught, the less business he had, the better for the credit of the Funchal firm.

At length, freed from the vulgar importunities of the natives, the party proceeded along the dirty narrow streets, upwards towards the country — Wilson's house being situated on the very verge of the town. What particularly struck the strangers, in the course of their progress, was

the uniform costume of the women: it is the same in all ranks and classes, and consists of a blue cloak and hood, invariably worn out of doors; this disguise, which has superseded the more graceful veil, covers the whole of the dress and figure, and is so perfect and impervious, that flirtations have actually taken place between ladies and their husbands, from whom no other invention could have extorted so much civility and attention to their wives.

They continued their journey over the sharp pebbly pavements of the hilly street, until they at length reached the residence of the agent. He was ready to meet and greet them, although he seldom passed the threshold of his door, and never at any time the boundary of his garden. His reception of Mrs. Hanningham was warm and cordial, and knowing what she *now* knew, Katherine was not so thunderstruck as she otherwise would have been, at seeing him rush into her father's arms — she recognised him in an instant, — she had seen him ONCE BEFORE.

She had scarcely time to collect her spirits after the realisation of her suspicions, before she felt herself clasped to the heart of the old gentleman, seeing at the same moment Wilson's daughter, a lovely girl of about nineteen, rush into Maxwell's arms, and hide her burning cheek in his bosom.

This very dramatic scene did not take more time in acting than it takes in writing. Its effects, however, were more striking — every body seemed to know why it occurred, yet nobody had spoken on the subject — no confidence had been made — no course of proceeding had been anticipated — it was a burst of feeling, comprehensible to all the parties, explicable by none; and from the instant the characters subsided into rationality, and assumed their seats, it appeared as if, by some tacit convention amongst them all, that not one syllable of elucidation should pass their lips. The time present was their own, and the future, if it gave promise of brighter days, might be anticipated; the present and the future were, therefore, at their command, the retrospective was prohibited, and with this apparent understanding, the happy — for in their degree they were happy — the happy party fell into the

discussion of ordinary topics, and presently seated themselves round Wilson's hospitable board at supper.

Hospitality at Fayal, though, as it is every where else, amiable, is not expensive. The cheapness of Villa da Horta is one of its great recommendations, although, when strangers have to deal, and the British consul is the medium, Firkins does all he can to destroy even that. Forty fine fish smoke on your table — that is, if you have room for them — for the charge of a vintain — one penny-halfpenny, and a dessert of one hundred oranges costs less than a shilling. Not a spot is uncultivated on the face of Fayal; ploughs, harrows, clover, and corn-fields, carry the mind back to home; and the thrushes and blackbirds, unknown in most other colonies, seem to speak English as they warble their wood notes wild. Every thing grows there, except cabbages, which are universally destroyed by a peculiar sort of grub, as soon as they break from the ground; but grapes, spices, even sugar, corn, lemons, cloves, besides all our English fruits, flourish in the greatest perfection. Woodcocks are in abundance; pheasants and wild rabbits are plentiful; but neither hares nor partridges are known.

The feast, however, that the assembled party at Wilson's enjoyed was of a higher order than that which money could procure, or Firkins overcharge: there was an interchange of affection, a return of gratitude the most powerful, an expression of satisfaction the most entire, in that small circle, which all its members felt, and which none dared express — there was a mystery — there was a secret, which charmed their hearts, but which sealed their lips. They were extremely well pleased with themselves: two or three points remained to grieve about; but that they were there, and together, was so great a blessing to some of the party, that the minor evils of their situation were at the moment forgotten.

"We lead a primitive life here," said Wilson; "had you, Mr. Maxwell, fallen upon our island suddenly from the bustle and interests of a busy professional career in London, it would perhaps have struck you more forcibly; but having undergone a probation in Madeira, (which, however

Mr. Hanningham describes as being gaiety itself compared to this,) you are not so sensible to our dulness."

"An Englishman, Mr. Wilson," said the surgeon, "carries all over the world a very large portion of comfort with him; it may be prejudice to admire the effect he produces upon surrounding objects, but it certainly is truth, that he anglicises every thing within the sphere of his influence."

"Always excepting," said Wilson, "our official Englishman here, Mr. Consul Firkins, whose family and habits are still entirely Portuguese — not Portuguese of the mother country, but of the colonies. However, to-morrow my daughter shall show you the lions of our dirty little city, and you shall judge, by a peep into other parts of the neighbourhood, how much she has done to improve our humble residence. As for me, of course, I stir out but seldom — the apprehension that I ——"

"Exactly," said Maxwell, interrupting him, "that you might over exert yourself in your delicate state of health — I see. Well, to-morrow then we shall put ourselves under Miss Wilson's guidance, and enjoy the sights."

"I hope your son finds the climate of Madeira agree with him," said Wilson; "I have never seen him, but I have heard most favourable accounts of him."

"Yes — yes," said the surgeon, evidently anxious — why, I cannot pretend to say — to avoid the conversation; "he is an excellent, exemplary young man, and amongst other proofs of his amiability of disposition, has had the good fortune to secure the invaluable friendship of Hanningham."

"If Hanningham had *not* been his friend," said Wilson, greatly agitated, "he would have been the most ungrateful of ——"

"To be sure — to be sure; so he would," said Maxwell.

"I suppose," said Wilson, "he will lose his heart to some of those black-eyed beauties who abound in the island where he is now, and so ——"

"No, no," said Maxwell, "I ——"

"I apprehend," said Mrs. Apperton, "that my brother's heart is not his own to give."

"Indeed, Katherine," said the surgeon, "I know

nothing about that; and I don't see very well, how you should know more than I do. I ——"

"My child and I," said Wilson, "very often talk of you all — of whom else should we talk? — and we have certainly settled that he could not remain a bachelor merchant in Madeira."

"Indeed, my dear father," said Miss Wilson, who seemed as much averse from talking of family matters as Maxwell, "I never said any thing about Mr. Maxwell. Why should I? he does not even know me."

"No, to be sure he does not," said Maxwell; "it would be very odd indeed, Miss Wilson, if he did. But never mind my poor Ned; he is no doubt taking care of his own business; let us take of ours. Love and wine go very prettily together in a convivial song; but in common life, a man can surely sell Madeira without being married; and I dare say Ned will remain single for some time to come."

"I am quite sure he will," said Katherine.

During the two hours through which this sort of "touch and go" conversation lasted, it seemed singular that it never went or touched upon the affairs of Apperton, and the rumour of his death. At Fayal, from its peculiar position, unless a return fruit schooner happen to bring later intelligence, a Plymouth paper four months old is a novelty to be caught at, and talked of as a phenomenon; and in the ordinary course of things, London news comes to Villa da Horta quickest, *viâ* the United States, or even the East Indies: nor, which perhaps was even more remarkable, did Wilson and Hanningham exchange one syllable with regard to the agency, or indeed any other point connected with mercantile matters.

When they parted for the night, there was an earnestness of affection exhibited between Miss Wilson and Katherine Apperton quite incompatible, as it would have appeared to a stranger, with the shortness of their acquaintance; and when the three ladies got together for a half-hour's *cause* — gossip is a better word perhaps — the perfect intimacy, the complete, unreserved, and entire confidence of the party in each other, would, if any body had seen it, have seemed miraculous; while their conversation, had any body heard

it, would have seemed rather the result of inspiration than any thing else. To be sure, female hearts and minds soon assimilate; but save and except the Rovers, no ladies in Christendom ever so soon swore an eternal friendship as Miss Wilson and Mrs. Apperton.

After breakfast the junior branches of the party proceeded on their promised ramble of discoveries, leaving Mr. Wilson and Mr. Maxwell to a *tête-à-tête*:—a chess-board was placed before them—both the elderly gentlemen professing a Philidoric attachment to that scientific game; but it did not escape the notice of the loungers, when they returned from their stroll, that the white queen's pawn was the only piece that had stirred during their absence, and even that faithful attendant had begun his march before their departure, seeing that Maxwell had him "betwixt his finger and thumb" just as they were quitting the little drawing-room that opened into a neat English flower-garden.

The travellers proceeded down towards the water before they went to see the government-house. Its possessor, a man of considerable eminence, receives, as a reward for his arduous duties of legislation, a stipend of about one hundred and fifty pounds per annum, and a duty on pigs, which are at Fayal taxed as horses are in England, and, as I have already stated, are nearly as large as those animals are (in Shetland, at any rate). It was suggested to be etiquette for Hanningham to pay his respects to his Excellency; but it was agreed to postpone his visit, seeing that they had ascertained that his Excellency was at that moment at home.

The party first visited the church of Saint Antonio, which is a very neat building; not clean, for that nothing in Fayal, except Wilson's house, was; but the ornaments were in better taste than usual. St. Antony's coat and waistcoat were of a better cut, and his wig, with a Ramilies queue, was much less grotesque than saints' wigs in those parts usually are. They then proceeded to the convent of St. Juan, which stands on an eminence, and has an agreeable garden; within its walls nearly six hundred women are immured. Well may the highly-gifted Mrs. Norton, in her description of a faded beauty, exult in the

inviolable freedom of English women, when she makes her heroine say, —

> " But I refused him; though my aunt did say
> That it was an advantage thrown away.
> (He an advantage!) — that she 'd make me rue it —
> Make *me* a nun — *I'd like to see her do it.* "

One sweetly pretty girl came to the grate, and strange to say — is it strange? — selected Hanningham as the friend to whom she chose to address her little story, in preference to any of the ladies. The story was brief, but so closely resembles one once told to myself under nearly similar circumstances, that it is interesting as exhibiting the frequency of similar occurrences.

She told Hanningham that her name was Isabella; that she was the daughter of a Portuguese nobleman, and had been betrothed in marriage to some man whom she had never seen; that upon the breaking out of some disturbances in Lisbon, consequent upon a vain and impotent attempt to force an English-made constitution upon the country, she had been for security sent to' Fayal from the convent to which she had been previously conveyed on the death of her mother. She added, that her sister, younger than herself, was also in the convent, and that if Hanningham would come to the parlour the following evening, she would ask leave of the lady abbess to give him some tea and sweetmeats, and that she would bring her sister to the grate. Hanningham, at the risk of being shut up himself, asked the poor girl if she would like to go to England, to which she answered, " Most willingly," when an ancient gorgon making her appearance at the moment, Isabella *said* she was perfectly happy where she was.

Hanningham saw her once again to enquire if there was any body to whom he could convey a letter, or intelligence of her; but she shook her head, and a tear fell from her bright black eyes; she was afraid to speak — she thrust her hand through the grate; but the space between the two *grilles* was too wide to permit of its being kissed, which in the way of friendship it would otherwise most certainly have been; but when the turnabout came round, Hanningham found in it a bunch of artificial flowers, a paper of

sweetmeats, and a small gold ring. Considering all things, however, Mrs. Hanningham had no cause of jealousy.

They then proceeded to the monastery of San Francisco, where the ladies were permitted to remain in the church, while Hanningham was most graciously received by the principal, who conducted him over every part of the building and into its gardens, where, in a sort of large alcove, were placed the effigies, as large as life, of every monk who had died in the house, set up over his burial-place, in his proper habit. In the refectory, on a long table, the dinner for the fraternity was laid, which consisted of a sort of biscuit, placed over a large glass of Fayal mixture, which Hanningham, as a judge, pronounced execrable, the whole place smelling worse than Mr. Firkins's consul shop. Hence Hanningham was reconducted by the Reverendissimo Padre, who attended him to the very threshold, and after an absence of half an hour, rejoined the ladies, who began to think that their companion had been entrapped by the pious body, and induced to renounce the sins of this wicked world, and his fair companions into the bargain.

Their expedition occupied the greater part of the forenoon; but their absence had not been of sufficient duration to afford an adequate opportunity to the two strangers, Wilson and Maxwell, to talk over their private affairs.

It became matter of discussion in the evening of this day, whether they should prolong their stay at Fayal beyond the next afternoon. The master of the brig Rover was completely at their orders; but the charges, under whatever denomination considered, in the way of freight, or demurrage, were heavy, and Hanningham having achieved the object of his wishes in seeing his agent, felt it prudent to do a violence to his own desire to stay where he was for any longer time, and hurry his departure for England.

Wilson and Maxwell had, during the progress of the rest of the party, discussed, amongst other matters, the business nearest the heart of the latter, concerning the misconduct of Apperton, and the question as to what it would be most advisable in the first instance to do; for the best informed of the party had but very imperfect intelligence to act upon in a matter of so much delicacy. Wilson's advice

was, that Maxwell and his daughter should, on their first arrival in England, as indeed had been previously suggested, assume a fictitious name, under which they might remain quiet and unmolested in the country, while Hanningham should exert himself in the arrangement of affairs in London. Maxwell would have been glad if Wilson could have accompanied him too, but that was of course impossible.

Miss Wilson, whose beauty and grace, whose winning manners and numerous accomplishments made her at once an object of admiration and affection, lavished upon Hanningham so much kindness and attention, that a stranger would have wondered at the evenness of Mrs. Hanningham's temper, who not only heard such protestations, but saw such practical proofs of their mutual regard, in bearing a rival so near her throne: but it seemed that she was afflicted with the mental blindness by which, as I have already said, all the world appear to be more or less affected; for while she endured the most palpable exchange of something very like love between her husband and her friend, she seemed less moved than she was, when he exhibited his ring and bouquet, the present of a poor girl, placed beyond his reach, and secured within a couple of grates two feet and a half asunder. Such, however, are the extraordinary inconsistencies of our nature.

The day wore on and the hours fled, and communications passed between the party and the master of the brig; but considering the usual freedom of intercourse in colonial life, and the unceremonious customs of such places as Fayal, not to speak of the hospitality of Wilson, a stranger would have wondered, that although an extremely gentlemanlike man, and although he had given them every cause to be pleased and satisfied with his conduct during the voyage, the master of the brig Rover had never been invited to breakfast, dine, or sup at the agent's. Nay, on the second day of their residence in the island, when he had found his way to the house, Hanningham happening to see him approach by the flower-garden, went out to meet him; and having been joined by his wife and Mrs. Apperton, took his arm, and walked him down again to

the water-side, and saw him safely launched, in his boat, on to his native element, and did not quit the beach till he was well on his way to the brig.

It must be admitted that the schipper, who was conscious that he had exercised every proper degree of liberality towards his passengers, felt this slight; but he attributed it to the character of the place rather than to any other peculiarity; for when he landed, and proceeded to the consul shop of Mr. Firkins, that illustrious impostor informed him that he had taken the liberty of ordering him dinner and a bed at Graves's hotel, the landlord (and waiter) at which was the son of another English vice-consul, who, like the Misses Firkins, understood no language but Portuguese, and who, having cleaned the knives and laid the cloth, sat down to the said dinner with the said master of the brig, as if he were *giving* him a hospitable reception. The weather getting worse as the night closed in, the master of the brig chose to remain on shore, but strolled down to the consul's *pour passer le temps*, when again the Fayalian hospitality evinced itself by the consul's informing him that they always went to bed early at the hotel; which intelligence he conveyed to his guest just at the moment when Mr. Firkins and some select friends were about to feed upon a supper laid out on a long table in the adjoining room. The schipper, who was a bit of a wag, seeing that his Excellency, (as Firkins would have himself called by his dependants,) was anxious to begin his repast, which he had resolved not to do until the stranger was gone, brought himself to an anchor, and staid at least an hour after the hint had been given him to go, and made himself nearly sick by drinking half a dozen glasses of the Fayal mixture, which, filthy as it was, its still more filthy owner was anxious to save.

But the negative want of hospitality on the part of Firkins was not the worst of it; for when the moment of departure arrived, the worthy gentleman sent off in a boat the stock which the schipper had bought of him at exorbitant prices, seeing that no dealer dared compete with Firkins when an English vessel was concerned. He however delayed doing so, although he had been paid for the

things in the morning, until the evening, when it was quite dark, blowing fresh, and the brig under way, standing on and off waiting for them. Amongst the stock, which chiefly consisted of vegetables and lanky pigs, was one bullock, and two half ankers of brandy, which the consul had somehow got into his possession, and for which he charged a notable sum. When the boat got alongside there was a good deal of sea running; the vegetables and the pigs, however, were hoisted in; but by a heavy lurch of the brig one way, and a deep pitch of the boat the other, the brandy and the bullock went overboard, and the schipper was forced, having no time to ligitate, to put up with the loss and be off without them. Poor good easy man, innocent of the extent of these manœuvres, he contented himself with denouncing, in his homely way, the stupidity of the Fayal boatmen, and in which, in the simplicity of his honest heart, he firmly believed, never suspecting that the bullock and the brandy had before the accident been thoroughly secured with three or four fathoms of line, and that the moment the good brig Rover squared her yards, filled, and was away, the brandy, bullock, and all, were towed ashore, just as well as ever, and that before the next day dawned the animal was in the stable, and the spirits in the cellar, ready for another shipment at the same prices, to the next dupe who could be found to give them.

I am not sorry for this digression, because in the scuffle we have avoided the melancholy ceremony of taking leave, and a detail of the "sweet sorrow," which had nearly lasted till the morrow. Miss Wilson appeared more deeply afflicted than any of the party; the separation seemed to her the death-blow of all her hopes and expectations. But what those hopes and expectations actually were, it seems very unlikely that we should, at all events in the present stage of this history, ascertain. Certain it is that Mrs. Apperton and Miss Wilson were, during the stay of the former in Fayal, inseparable; their conversation seemed deeply interesting, and as their parting was so decidedly affectionate, it is to be inferred that their acquaintance, recently as it had been formed, and short as was its

duration, was excessively agreeable and highly satisfactory to both of them.

The good brig Rover might still have gladdened the eyes of those whom she had left behind, but night concealed her from their view, and when the schipper took his next observation, she was bowling along with a fine steady breeze — Terceira bearing fourteen miles S.S.E., Gracioso N.N.W. twenty miles, Pico W.N.W. four miles, St. George's N.W. eight miles. In vain did the fair and deserted daughter of the agent Wilson wend her way, in the morning, to the rising ground on the left of their quiet and secluded residence; no vestige of the Rover was visible. She was speeding on her voyage, which, in order to relieve the anxiety of the reader, —that is, if he feels any— it may be proper here to say, she concluded on the ninth day, at three o'clock, at which time she let go her anchor at Spithead; — but having said thus much, we must revert for a moment to Mr. Edward Maxwell, the solitary though not sleeping partner in the mercantile house at Madeira.

It is impossible to describe the misery of the poor devoted young gentleman's situation, or the state of his nerves and feelings, as he paced the long, empty, dreary rooms of the house, or looked over the gallery into the quadrangle, and saw two or three squalid girls sitting huddled on the stairs, waiting for alms or food; or affected to busy himself by giving orders, about literally nothing; for until ships come, and a demand arises for the staple commodity of the island, every thing is as calm and quiet at Funchal as may be.

One thing, however, occurred to him, which has occurred to many other people, who, being similarly situated, have had nothing else to do; and that was to improve the house, during Hanningham's absence, by uniting two additional rooms to the rest of the suite of apartments. These rooms were specially his own, and would have communicated with the rest of the rooms on the same floor, had not a small dark closet intervened: the annihilation of this closet was the favourite object of the deserted Ned Maxwell; it was only used as a lumber-room; the partition which disconnected it from the other rooms was thin,

and only of wainscot, so that the great achievement which he so anxiously desired to perform, could be completed by doing what a sailor would call "knocking away the bulkhead." What are wainscotings or partitions to an improving genius; light, air, and even something like a view would be gained by the change, and he resolved to occupy himself so effectually in the fulfilment of his design, that his partner and his partner's partner should pronounce him on their return the Palladio of the island, the very Nash of Funchal.

Carpenters were summoned; saws, planes, and chisels were put in motion, and very speedily did the "wooden wall" succumb; but still there were obstacles for which Maxwell was scarcely prepared. Where could he deposit the huge cases and boxes with which this closet had been filled? This was however settled by the advice of a confidential servant, and the new discovery of one detachment of packages was actually the groundwork of a series of new improvements. No less than fifteen of the most ponderous cases contained pictures — the accidental acquisition of these articles of *vertu* gave a new turn to the inventive disposition of the young architect, and he resolved to make his arrangements chime in with the exhibition of these works of art, which seemed to him too long to have been hidden — again were the saws and chisels in activity, but directed especially against the cases in question.

First came to light, a Claude, or a Wilson, or — a copy — beautiful, clear, and brilliant; then a Canaletti, undoubted; thirdly, a Wouvermans, with a trumpeter as natural as life; and next a Cuyp, with a grey round-ended horse, just fit for Wouvermans' trumpeter; then a decided Gerard Dow; an old gentlewoman selling carrots, at a window, over a Turkey carpet, with a bulfinch in a cage, and some gold-fish in a glass globe beside her; and then an unquestionable bit of Teniers, depicting vice, drinking, drunkenness, and its effects: all these, together with a bouncing dame in the best style of Rubens, and a smoke-dried specimen of Rembrandt, as black as a hat, were all exposed to view, and places speedily assigned them, according to the best rules of classification, and the judicious

disposition of light; when one immense case attracted the notice of the enterprising Maxwell. Large nails and great care seemed to have been used in securing this huge object, and the young wine-merchant almost hoped it might be one of Lawrence's largest portraits; that perhaps of Kemble as Hamlet, with Yorick's skull in his hand, which was painted in the year of the great scarcity in England, and was criticised by some blundering blockhead as a representation of a starving Briton thanking Providence for the blessing of a brown loaf. What it was, he of course knew not; but the uncertainty added greatly to the interest which he felt; and accordingly heavier hammers and larger chisels were sent for, and greater exertions made to burst the cearments which held the hidden treasure.

Crash went the sides, away split one piece, out flew another, until at length the picture, closely covered with baizes and flannels, was seen. Yet still in disguise; for such had been the care with which it had been deposited in its resting place, that half an hour more was consumed in ripping open the cloths in which it was enveloped. The assiduous workmen, however, proceeded to divest it of all encumbrances, and raising it against the wall of the apartment, the light burst full upon the canvass, and exhibited to the astonished view of Edward Maxwell a whole-length portrait, finely painted, of his mysterious beauty!—the lady of Long Acre—the sylph of Charing Cross—the Venus of the Green Park. The likeness was accurate beyond belief—it was she—she herself—of that no doubt could exist—*but then who was she?*

CHAPTER VI.

When shall we three meet again?

SHAKSPEARE.

At the present juncture of our history, it should seem that all the persons most intimately connected with each other,

and whose union would be most conducive to the clearing up of certain mysteries, were to be widely separated from each other, and dispersed, as it were, over the face of the earth.

The Maxwells and Hanninghams had quitted Madeira just at the instant when their presence, at least that of the latter, would of course have elucidated in a moment the mystery of the hidden and now discovered picture—that there was something very like mystery connected with it, was clear; for none of the servants or clerks, confidential or ordinary, to whom Edward applied for information, could, or if they could, would enlighten him in the slightest degree upon the subject. They only declared that they knew nothing of the picture, that they had never seen any body there resembling it, and most of them denied any knowledge of the fact that there were any pictures in the house. One, a little more communicative than the rest, observed that Mrs. Hanningham had a sister, and that as it was evidently a modern portrait, it might be a likeness of her; and another, who was nearly as good a hand at discovering resemblances as the old Lady Ligonier is said to have been, who was startled with the likeness between the master of the house where she was making a visit, and the coal-scuttle which the servant brought into the drawing-room, and which her ladyship mistook for her hostess's son and heir,—found out that there was a striking similarity between the nose in the picture and that of Mrs. Hanningham herself, excepting, to be sure, that the lady's nose was aquiline and the picture's Grecian; and that the eyes, save that they were black instead of blue, which Mrs. Hanningham's were, had exactly the same expression as those of that lady.

If, however, Edward was tormented and plagued to death by this accidental *dénouement* in Madeira, the Maxwells were more embarrassed by what they discovered to be the real state of the case with respect to Apperton in England.

They reached Spithead, as I have already mentioned, in safety. It was then suggested that Maxwell and his daughter should land in the evening at Ryde; and that,

there, in some quiet lodging, and under an assumed name for the present, they should remain secluded until Hanningham should be able to send them such intelligence as might guide them in their future proceedings.

Ryde might be considered, in these days of improvement, when the place has grown from an inconsiderable fishing village to a staring, flaring watering-place, no very fit spot for concealment; but with proper precaution as concerned Maxwell, who, under the pretext of being an invalid, would not mix with the visiters in the streets or walks, or other public places, Katherine felt assured she could manage so as to avoid all suspicion of their real names, or views in settling there. The master of the Rover had been on shore and secured them a quiet lodging, away from the bustle of the fashionable acclivities, and the landlady being prepared for their reception in their new character and under their assumed names by the story which the schipper had given, and satisfied without further enquiries by a deposit of a month's rent for her apartments in advance, was ready to welcome the sick Mr. Martin and his amiable daughter. The assumption of this name was suggested by the schipper himself, who remarked, with a prudence and forethought which neither the surgeon nor his daughter were likely to possess, that as all their trunks and linen were marked with the letter M, it would be but correct to give themselves some name which began with the same letter.

To Maxwell, whose hatred of the sea was not to be overcome by practice, the quiet and repose of the cottage at Ryde, which, although it commanded a fine view of the splendid yet treacherous element, was covered with honeysuckles and jasmines, and shrouded by two or three old trees — rare ornaments to marine villas — were quite soothing and delightful. The spot seemed exactly suited to the purpose to which they had appropriated it — there was a stillness and a steadiness in the little comforts of land — and of all lands England — which tranquillised the old gentleman; and although he could not but see with pain the anxiety and watchfulness of Kate for intelligence from London respecting Apperton, his health rallied even in the

short space of three days; and he prayed that circumstances might permit him, during the remnant of his life, to enjoy ease and quiet such as he then possessed, even under a roof as humble as that which then sheltered them.

There was one sad thought which preyed upon poor Kate; one, too, which she ought not to have cherished until she had ascertained the fate of her worthless husband. She could not but feel the wretchedness of her situation, in being deprived by circumstances of hearing from Charles Somerford—her friend—she called him—her dear friend. If she could have guessed what had happened during the last two or three months of her absence, she might perhaps have felt an increased anxiety upon the subject; for although she ought to have relinquished every hope of ever being his, when she found herself the wife of another, it becomes necessary to admit that she had done no such thing; and certain it is, that if she could have beheld him domesticated with such a being as Lady Emily Denham, in such a family as that of Lord Lessingham, her feelings would have been most powerfully excited. She, however, was unconscious of the trials to which his fidelity was exposed, and felt anxious merely because she was deprived of the power of communicating with one, in whom she never could cease to feel the warmest interest.

It must, however, be admitted that there was yet another being, about whom Maxwell and Kate were anxious to hear something, and from whom they felt assured they should hear much, if they could bring about a meeting without danger; and this person, as the reader may perhaps already anticipate, was no other than our old friend Godfrey Moss. Little did they think, while planning some contrivance to let this ancient friend of the family into the secret of their residence at Ryde, that he, the identical Godfrey, was to be found every day, from ten till four, sitting in one of the wooden alcoves on the pier at that very place, watching the waves, and getting his usual "sniff of the briny," at the moderate rate of twopence per diem, or as he compounded for it, one shilling per week, Sundays included. Such, however, was the case; but there he might have sat, and smoked, and sighed, and

grumbled till doom's day, had not a slight attack of illness, which Kate suffered on the second or third day of Maxwell's stay in the island, rendered it necessary, or at least satisfactory to Maxwell, to call in a medical gentleman, whose agreeable manners and pleasant conversation were found to be most powerful auxiliaries to his drugs, draughts, potions, and powders.

This accomplished disciple of Esculapius was — not to speak it profanely — as well versed in the news and politics of the popular watering-place in which he practised, as Mr. Richard Gossip, who in the days of "my grandmother" operated in a different manner upon the inhabitants of the village where he flourished. To ingratiate himself with his new patient, and, as a punster would say, to secure his Martin as a swallow, the eloquent and vivacious leech proceeded to enumerate all the "characters" that enlivened Ryde; and, amongst others, having given precedence to a mad lord and a half-witted baronet, he named Mr. Godfrey Moss as a most eccentric, but very agreeable person, whose happiness seemed to consist in grumbling, and who spent all the time which he could spare from eating, drinking, and smoking, in finding fault with his wretched fellow "creturs," as he used to call them.

Little did Mr. Squills know the interest he had excited, by the mention of this greatly-desired friend, nor conceive how very much he had puzzled his hearers as to the safest mode of attracting him to the cottage. The Maxwells listened to the doctor's detail without betraying their emotion; and the doctor became interested in the Maxwells, because it was evident from the old gentleman's conversation, however disguised, that his knowledge upon medical matters was equal, if not superior, to his own. The name was not familiar to his ear, but still the attempt to conceal his acquaintance with the subject on which they spoke was vain; and at length the doctor — so called by *brevet* at Ryde — was compelled to ask Maxwell if he was not, or had not been, in the profession. To this question, Maxwell returned a somewhat evasive answer, which caused, when Squills returned home, an carnest and assiduous search in

the list of the two colleges to discover any practitioner of the name of Martin.

It may seem strange that the surgeon, being a surgeon, should have called in medical assistance in a place where he so anxiously wished for concealment; but those who know the diffidence of the faculty when so dear an object as a daughter is concerned, will appreciate the paternal solicitude which induced him to apply for extraneous assistance; besides, as medicines might be necessary, the technicalities which Maxwell could scarcely have avoided in his prescriptions, would have been more likely to lead to suggestions and enquiries respecting the strangers, than a straight-forward application to the professional man of the place; Maxwell having quite well assured himself, before he did so, that he knew nothing personally of the Ryde practitioner.

When Squills had retired, Maxwell and his daughter began to consider the means of securing the society of Mousetrap, and of acquiring the information they were so anxious to obtain from him; and it was at length decided to write him a note, directed to the hotel where Squills had told them he was living, in which enough should be said to guide him to the cottage, without committing to paper the secret, which to poor Maxwell appeared the most vital in the world—he, with the prevalent blindness to self-knowledge, being fully convinced that every sheriff in England had received orders to arrest him the moment he set foot in the country, and that bailiffs were lying in ambush in every town and village, ready to execute the mandates of their immediate superiors.

To the care of Kate was this special correspondence confided; she felt certain that a note of invitation in her well-known hand, although written in a fictitious name, would instantly apprise Moss of the real state of the case, while the matter might be made perfectly unintelligible to any ordinary reader. But then she feared one of those sudden ebullitions with which she had been so long familiarised, and which would perhaps in an instant of surprise, and, as she flattered herself, pleasure, betray the whole of the mystery to any body who might happen to be in the room

with him. Therefore it was that she couched her billet in the following terms:—

"If Mr. Moss should be disengaged this evening, and will call on Mr. Martin at Melrose Cottage, he will find a friend who will be extremely glad to see him."

This folded three corner-wise, and sealed with the device of a thistle, with "dinna forget" as a *devise*, was despatched to the domicile of the eccentric Godfrey, and left there according to order, by the rosy-elbowed damsel who attended on the Maxwells in their retirement.

When Godfrey "toddled" (as he called it) home from the pier to dress for dinner — an operation which he performed by dipping the end of a towel into a basin of water, and rubbing his nose and mouth therewith; wiping just the ends of his fingers (bronzed with snuff) with whatever moisture there might be then left in the cloth, and shaking some of the pulverised pleasure of his life out of the folds of his coat — he found the triangular summons from Kate.

If there is one thing more worrying to a quick person than another, it is watching the deliberate motions of the apathetic recipient of a letter; he reads and re-reads the superscription, examines the seal, and spells the post-mark, in order to ascertain from whom it comes, before he opens it; when if he would but dash at it, crack the seal, and tear the envelope, he would know at once, and to a certainty, who was the writer. To this process was Mrs. Apperton's triangle submitted; the thistle caught Godfrey's eye as he pored over the seal with his glasses on.

"Thistleum," said he to himself; "some Scotch cretur with no clothes to his back — 'dinna forget' — trash! Let's see. 'If Mr. Moss is disengaged.' No go; Mr. Moss is *not* disengaged, 'Mr. Martin — Melrose Cottage.' Bou! cottage — scarlet door, with a knocker and brass plate on him, and a great green-topped lamp over him! Melrose Cotttage — 'glad to see him.' I should think so; not to be had, Mr. Martin, whoever you are: — provided for to-day, — some of the doctor's stuff at five, — roast mutton and port wineums, — 'find a friend at Melrose Cottage;' — the friend must stay till to-

morrow — perhaps a hoax altogether. — ' Dinna forget.' The cockney creturs would read that as English, and think it a Scotch invitation to tea. ' Dinner forget:' but I've no time to lose; and as for Mr. Martin, whoever he may be, I dare say my friend Squillums will be able to tell me something about him."

Here the clock, striking five, spoke so eloquently to Godfrey's anxious ear, that his soliloquy closed abruptly; and in ten minutes he was seated in the dining-room of his hospitable host, the doctor.

While the events of this afternoon are passing, the reader may perhaps be desirous of knowing something of the movements of Charles Somerford, who retired from his conference with Mr. Macleod in a state of excitement and worry, which few people who have not been placed in similar situations of difficulty can duly appreciate. All that his Indian friend and counsellor had urged, as to the great importance of the connection with Lord Lessingham in a worldly point of view, he fully entered into; he admitted to himself that Lady Emily was integrally, and without regard to any other consideration, as near perfection as mortal is permitted to be. Her manners, her disposition, as well as her mind, her talents, and accomplishments, were all enchanting and enchaining. Her beauty, blighted as it was, became more interesting than it even was in its full blaze and radiance; and the tenderness and gentleness with which illness had soothed and softened the buoyant spirits of her youth, rendered her too winning, too delightful, to be long associated with, with impunity. Somerford loved her — as a brother — as a friend — nay, perhaps if the secrets of his heart had been laid open, it would have been found, such is human fallibility, that his firm determination to reject this splendid opportunity of making such an alliance, was the result of principle rather than of passion, and that his resolution to remain faithful to Kate was founded upon a sentiment of honour which would not suffer him to put the charms and attractions of Lady Emily in competition, in his mind, with those of his first — and faithless — love.

Whether there are many men who, having been treated

—no matter under what circumstances—by a mistress, as Somerford had been treated by Miss Maxwell, would have pursued so straight a path, or maintained so rigid an observance of a pledge—which that mistress had herself violated—it is not for me to determine; it is sufficient for us to know that Charles, before he slept, wrote the following letter to Lord Lessingham:—

"My Lord,

"When our acquaintance commenced, and your lordship, in a manner most flattering to my feelings, invited and received me into your house on terms of friendship, I little thought that circumstances would have compelled me to endeavour to exculpate myself from an imputation of duplicity, which I fear must now lie upon my character; or to enter into explanations which cannot be interesting to your lordship, except as they may tend to justify the kindness which I have experienced under your lordship's roof.

"The conversation which passed between us this evening, renders farther concealment of my real circumstances as impossible as it would be dishonourable; and although a fear of incurring a charge of vanity has prevented my earlier stating to your lordship that, with which nothing but the occurrence of an event I had not the presumption to anticipate, could justify my troubling your lordship, I feel myself now compelled to do so.

"Honoured beyond my utmost deserts by the favourable consideration of one of the loveliest and most amiable of human beings, what course have I to pursue?—but one—and that, one which however decidedly it blights the bright prospects of happiness I could not fail to enjoy under other circumstances, I am sure your lordship cannot fail to approve.

"The liberality, the nobleness of spirit, which your lordship has displayed in your conduct towards me, in the very peculiar situation in which I am placed, render me grateful beyond the means of expression; and the kindness and favour of Lady Emily Denham are too deeply engraven on my heart ever to be effaced; but, seeing and affectionately admiring all her virtues, and all her merits, I should

consider myself unworthy of the vast accumulation of favours which would be heaped upon me by an alliance with her, if I obtained those favours, and that happiness, by the violation of a pledge made—not to others—but to myself, in my early youth. It is clear, from what passed last night, that your lordship is aware of many of the circumstances to which I allude; amongst them, as you have said, you are aware that the faith plighted to me by the object of my earliest affections has been broken; but I have a strong feeling upon the point, however cogent and powerful your lordship's arguments on the question undoubtedly are; and I declare to your lordship, that I do not feel exonerated, by a failure in the lady's constancy to me, from an engagement I made in the face of Heaven alone, and when no human eye could see me.

"But, my lord, two points suggest themselves here, on which I earnestly implore your lordship's attention.

"The first is, the character of my conduct since my admission into your society: exonerate me, let me implore you, from the suspicion that in any way, by word, by look, by manner, or by implication, I put myself forward in the character of one aspiring to the hand or heart of Lady Emily Denham; and from this springs the other point which I wish more especially to be considered.

"If I were merely to declare that I had no object, in my constant association with your lordship's family, but the enjoyment of a society rendered most charming and fascinating to me, by the combination of attractions it possessed; and were I to dilate upon past circumstances or recall events gone by, to show that my views were wholly disinterested, except, as I have already observed, in the pleasure derivable generally from an association with your domestic circle, I might be doubted, and those who less know my heart than myself, might still charge me with what I believe is considered a venial crime, but which I confess I regard differently—heartless coquetry, and an intention to excite an affection, which I knew I had bound myself never to realise. But, my lord, when I detail to you the circumstances of my birth—when I tell your lordship, that my mother was the deserted illegitimate

child of some unknown seducer, and that the dishonour and discredit thus thrown upon my lineage lost me the object of my earliest attachment, the daughter merely of a professional man; your lordship will see that the very reason of the case will clear me from any such imputation. I came into your house a stranger; you received me kindly, hospitably—I may, I must say, affectionately; surely you do not—will not—cannot believe, that a man feeling as I do, and sensitive in the highest degree upon points of honour, as far as I am myself concerned, would have so used or misused the privilege you kindly afforded me, of mixing in your domestic society, to gain the affections of a lady of Lady Emily's rank, by doing which, I might inflict misery on her, in one case, or bring disgrace upon her in the other. Acquit me, my Lord—I know you will—of any such designs, and judge of my feelings by my conduct.

"My regiment is at present in Ireland; we expect orders for foreign service almost immediately: I must join them. Breathe not a word of this letter to Lady Emily; let her only know that I have been suddenly called hence, and early to-morrow I go; or if your lordship should feel that it would be better I should take leave of her, I will obey your commands, and stay until the evening. Order me as you please.

"My heart is too full to permit me to say a thousandth part of what I feel. If I have been imprudent in concealing from your lordship a suspicion which I had upon this point, attribute it to a diffidence which I have already said would not permit me to believe what now appears to be true. It is, indeed, a severe trial, and terminates our acquaintance in a manner far different from that which I had hoped for. Pray let me hear from your lordship, and assure me that I am not considered entirely unworthy of the kindness I have received.

"Believe me, my Lord,
"your lordship's faithful,
"and obliged servant,
"CHARLES SOMERFORD."

This letter, somewhat wild and incoherent as it was,

Somerford despatched by a messenger in the morning. Lord Lessingham, who was an early riser, received it long before his darling Emily was stirring; Somerford did not wait long for a reply; in less than an hour he received the following:—

"Dear Somerford;

"I can find no fault with either your past conduct or your present determination. There is not a word to be said; remember this, however, that none but persons meanly prejudiced, and of very little minds, consider faults or follies hereditary. However unworthily your grandfather might have acted, the exemplary conduct of your mother, whom he deserted, wholly obliterates her involuntary disgrace. Assure yourself, that with such a heart as yours, such a bar in your escutcheon is no blot. Amongst your sincerest friends and well wishers, always reckon,

"Yours truly,

"LESSINGHAM."

"I will manage about your departure. I think a regular separation is to be avoided: go—and God be with you!"

It was evident, from the tone of Lord Lessingham's letter, that he was attached to Somerford, and that his heart's hope was frustrated by the decided determination he had made with respect to Mrs. Apperton. Somerford felt relieved by the arrangement which his lordship had made, for he felt not exactly a doubt, that his stern resolve would have yielded to Lady Emily's tears in a parting interview, but he felt that he would rather have her, left impressed on his memory with the same placid smile of kindness which beamed on her intelligent countenance as she quitted the drawing-room the night before, than agitated by passion or grief; passion that he dare not return, grief that he might not assuage. Those who have felt that duty and honour compelled them to relinquish all that might have made them happy through life, will perhaps enter into the feelings of poor Charles Somerford.

There is a sequel to this portion of the story, which perhaps may as well be given here.

Charles Somerford proceeded on the following morning on his route to Dublin, where he had not been many days, before an order for the removal of his regiment to the West Indies arrived. This most unexpected order was to Somerford something like sentence of death; not in a metaphorical sense, which as a transportation from the land which was so shortly to contain Katherine, it might be understood to be; but in the literal matter-of-fact signification of the words; seeing that having been so long an invalid in a hot climate, his return to another, and a less healthy one, would almost certainly induce a relapse, and send the devoted major to an untimely grave.

There are secrets in all trades, and mysteries in all professions; and amongst masonic lodges of which the profane have no knowledge, the Horse Guards ranks as one; there, by some arrangement, of the nature of which I am not in the least aware, it was settled that Somerford should go out with his regiment, and then exchange, by some process, with another major, who was there, and who did not wish to come home; and so with this scheme properly devised and concocted, the major once more embarked on the briny ocean, and took his departure for Jamaica or Barbadoes; which, mattereth little to the carrying on of our history.

Lady Emily was prepared for the departure of her beloved Charles—for he *was* beloved, with an ardour and fervency that man has but little idea of. The amiable girl had long in secret nursed the affection, which very early in their acquaintance warmed her heart, but she concealed her feelings, and struggled with a preference which she could not avoid giving to merits and attractions like Somerford's; but when her poor grandfather perceived—as he did, and as she saw he did—that her manner towards his young visiter was more decidedly kind and affectionate than to any one else; that she sat and listened to hear what he read, or sang, or played, with an intenseness of attention which no other person or pursuit could command; when she saw this, and saw that Lord Lessingham appeared studiously to bring and leave them together; that his conduct towards Somerford was more than friendly, more paternal; —what could she think, but believe, as was the case, that

her grandfather, anxious for her happiness, had determined to sacrifice some little worldly prejudices about rank or fortune, to secure her comfort through life, by uniting her to the man whom she loved, and whom he considered worthy of her affections.

Lord Lessingham had determined to do exactly what his grand-daughter anticipated; he forced nothing, he exacted nothing: but permitted affairs to take their course, convinced, at last, that their termination would be an offer from Somerford, and an acceptance by himself. He did not certainly foresee the possibility of Charles having a prior engagement; and if he even had suspected it, since they occasionally spoke of Kate, the very fact of her having married another lover would have set all doubt upon that point at rest, for his lordship was not at all prepared for so singular an act of self-devotion as that which, in the sequel, Somerford confessed himself to have committed.

Think then what a blow — what a deadly blow it must have been to a delicate creature almost on the verge of the grave, to feel herself rejected, as she did, in the short yet, to her, terrible conversation with Somerford, which has already been recorded. It alarmed her dignity — it aroused all the woman in her bosom, and exhibited her to herself, timid and shrinking as she ever had been, from all the world before — repelled and discarded by the man to whom, not only her manner, but her words themselves, had betrayed her affection for him.

It was of itself a blow, almost too much for her; but when it was followed up by the announcement of the actual departure of the object of her affections, it became fatal: for weeks she remained silent and absorbed, her eyes fixed on vacancy, and her cheek pale as the driven snow; sometimes a tear would fall, and a convulsive sob follow; but else she was placid and calm.

A change of scene and air was recommended, and they proceeded to Devonshire; but scene or air was nought to the poor broken-hearted Emily; she submitted patiently to all that the physicians directed or prescribed, and the venerable Lord Lessingham watched hour by hour over the

flickering light of her existence, the termination of which was to leave him old, infirm, and alone in all the world; for sorrows had fallen upon him, and death had been busy in his house; and here before him lay the last inheritor of his temporal honours.

Why trace we all this misery — why profane a scene so sad and sorrowful, by looking upon such a wreck of hopes and joys? One little year before, the roses bloomed on her downy cheek, and the diamond sparkled in her eye — now, dim were their lights, and pale that beauteous flower. Man, in his various pursuits, derives consolation in grief, and his thoughts, painful and harrowing at times, are diverted by the mixture of his avocations; but woman — woman who loves — lives on that love alone; all her thoughts, all her hopes, all her wishes centre there. What then must be the pang, the cruel, cutting, killing pang, which at one blow destroys them all?

The lovely innocent remained for several weeks scarcely living; and when the last evening of her existence arrived, the change from sleep to death was hardly perceptible — in fact, she merely ceased to breathe, and those who were round her, could know only by the cry of grief which burst from her agonised grandfather, that her pure soul had fled.

CHAPTER VII.

——— I do remember an apothecary. SHAKSPEARE.

"I SAY, Squillums," said Moss, when he was well placed at the doctor's, "do you know who the people are that live at Melrose Cottage — Martin, isn't that the name?"

"Martin," said the doctor; "the young lady is ill — a patient of mine."

"Natural consequences," said Moss; "but what are they? — where do they come from? — what do they do?"

"They seem," said the doctor, "mighty quiet people. By their own account they have just come to England. I

was called in to attend the young lady; but I cannot help fancying the father to be of the faculty."

"Knows more than yourself, perhaps," said Moss.

"He does not think so," said Squills, "or he would not have called me in."

"No proof that," replied Moss: "you all know the Tom-foolery of the thing, and you don't like to play your tricks upon yourselves or your families — quite right, too."

"I can give you one more bit of information, and that is all," said the doctor: "the daughter's name is Kate, and, though she is called Miss Martin, wears a wedding ring upon her finger."

"La! my dear," said Mrs. Squills, "don't talk in that way — it's downright scandal."

"A ring!" said Moss; "Kate! — Kittums! — halloo! — this means something — let me see!" saying which, he took out the note which he had received, and glancing his eye over it, returned it hastily to his pocket. "Ah! Martin — creturs — well!"

The whole truth had flashed upon him; and now his anxiety to get to them was easily demonstrable in his fidgetting haste to get through his port wine, and, as he said, "*be off.*"

"What, before tea, Mr. Moss?" said the doctor's lady; "you, too, who are so fond of your toast and butter."

"That's right, ma'am," said Moss, "remind me of your toast and butter, do — six-and-eightpence, eh? No, no: none of your toast and butter to-night — I must go."

"Which way are you going?" said Squills; "I must take a turn, too."

"To prevent the creturs getting well too fast," said Moss. "I'm going to the hotel. I have some business to do; but I'll see you in the morning."

"Shall I say any thing to the Martins about you?" said Squills.

"No, no; I know nothing of the Martins, nor they of me," replied Moss, who walked, or rather hobbled, as fast as he could, in the direction of the hotel, and out of the way of the scrutinising doctor; and when he had run himself out of sight, proceeded to enquire the way to the *rus in urbe* which his friends inhabited.

It was located in a sort of court or alley, with a clipped hedge-row on each side, and had, as Moss truly anticipated, a brass knocker and plate on the door; the former Mr. Godfrey Moss used with such dexterity, that in less than a minute the maid, with the morn-like fingers, opened the portal wide, when Godfrey, with the greatest care and caution, lest he should betray his friend the surgeon, or involve him in any difficulties by his awkwardness, said, "Is Mr. Maxwell at home?"

"No, sir," said the female, "no Mr. Maxwell lives here, sir."

"Maxwell did I say?" said Moss; "Martin I mean."

"Oh yes, sir," replied the virgin, her plump face relaxing into the sweetest of plebeian smiles, "Mr. Martin is at home, and Miss — up-stairs, sir, if you please."

And accordingly up-stairs mounted the maid, and up-stairs followed Godfrey, whose surprise was somewhat excited when the girl threw open the drawing-room door, and announced him by his proper name, Mr. Moss.

"Why how do you know me?" said Godfrey.

"Every body knows you, sir," said the maid.

"Psha!" said Moss, "silly cretur! Ah, Mack — Mack — Martin I mean — Kate, how are ye — how d'ye do? Give me a kiss, Kittums! Give us your hand — well, alive and merry, eh? but——"

"Hush!" said Kate; "recollect the size of our house, and the thinness of the partitions. We must talk no secrets here."

"Tell me," said Maxwell, in a whisper, "have you any news of Apperton?"

"He 's off, sir," said Moss; "gone to the other world."

"Dead!" said Kate, in a tone so very peculiar, that, in mercy to her character as a wife, I shall not attempt to describe it.

"Dead?" said Moss; "not he. He's gone abroad to prevent dying, I believe. Oh, the cretur! — that king of the Cat and Cauliflower, as I call him — forgery is about the best of his crimes."

"Mind, Mr. Moss," said Maxwell, "thin walls."

"What, are there many listening creturs?" said Moss.

"No," said Katherine; "at the present moment

there is nobody in the house but the maid servant and——"

"I tell ye what do with her," said Godfrey: "tell her to step to the hotel, and desire Yelf to send me a bottle of *my* particular ginnums; that will give the maid an errand, and when she comes back, Kate, give you a job to make some of the old stuff."

"Still at it, Moss," said Maxwell.

"Still," said Moss; "slow poison, like Dr. Johnson's green tea, isn't it, Maxwell? But how well you are looking. So you have had Lord Hillingdon at Madeira; he was here before he went, for a day or two—such a cretur! Well, and how's Neddums?"

"We left him quite well," said Kate, "and partner to a wine merchant."

"Wine stuff!" said Moss: "what, Neddums running about with a tin funnel and a bit of tallow candle stuck in a lath—bou! Has he found out his flying Dutchwoman yet?"

"No," said Maxwell; "and never will, as I take it."

Kate, according to Godfrey's instruction, before the conversation went any farther, despatched the maid in pursuit of the desired beverage; and taking advantage of her absence they gleaned from Moss, in his odd disconnected mode of conversation, that Apperton's conduct had been most atrocious, and that nothing but a precipitate flight would have saved his neck.

This was a terrible discovery for poor Katherine — her husband gone beyond redemption, ruined in fortune and character, and yet firmly bound to her for the rest of his natural life. Much better, as Moss said, would it have been that he had died; but some people die to grieve the hearts of the survivors, and others live to plague their fellow-creatures, and these are amongst the curiosities of the world.

"I should recommend you, Mack," said Godfrey, "to put out your feelers; try and beat up the enemy's quarters before you come out of your concealment."

"I have already taken precautionary measures," said Maxwell. "Hanningham, who is my son's partner at

Madeira, has gone to London for the purpose of instituting enquiries."

"Hanningham," said Moss; "what relation is he to the man who murdered his partner — any? I hope not; perhaps the fancy runs in the family."

"He is the son of that Hanningham," said Maxwell.

"Pretty connection, Kittums!" said Godfrey.

"He is, I assure you," said Mrs. Apperton, "a most delightful person; and his wife one of the quietest, most unassuming of women."

"Does he ever refer to the accident that occurred to his father?" said Moss.

"Not to strangers, of course," said Maxwell. "He has talked to me much upon the subject."

"Why I suppose he is rather shy of the subject," said Moss: "a gibbet, by way of a family tree, makes a man silent about his ancestors."

"For my part," said Kate, "I have heard so much on the point, and heard such excellent traits in his father's character, that I believe him to have been unjustly convicted."

"What were the circumstances — I almost forget?" said Moss; "things like that go in at one ear and out at the other."

"The story is short," said Maxwell. "He had entered into partnership with a man whose temper was violent, and whose mind was ill suited, as it seems by all accounts, for the cares of business. Some great errors appeared in their books, which Vernon — so was the partner named — either could not or would not explain, and a long smouldering discontent at length burst into a violent quarrel."

"Here's the ginnums, Mrs. Kate," said Moss, seeing the Hebe of Melrose Cottage enter with bottle, jug, lemons, sugar, and all according to the ancient regime, and in conformity with Mrs. Apperton's directions. "I beg your pardon, Mack — that is to say, Martin; but I'll listen patiently — only I'm rather thirsty, and — go on."

"It was one evening, after a more than usually violent altercation between them," said Maxwell, "that they quitted the city together in Hanningham's gig——"

"Oil and vinegar in the same bottle," said Moss.

"It had been always Hanningham's custom to carry pistols in this gig on their nocturnal excursions to his country-house, somewhere near Tooting; and on this occasion those weapons were in the carriage in which Vernon, according to his usual custom, took a seat as far as Balham, where *he* resided. On *this* night Vernon was shot dead upon Clapham Common; the noise of the firing attracted the notice of some people on the road, and they succeeded in stopping the gig, in which Hanningham was seen flying, rather than driving, along the road from the scene of blood."

"That's awkward," said Moss — "one leetel bit more sugar, Kate. Well, Mack?"

"Lights were procured," said Maxwell; "and Hanningham, in the midst of his alarm and trepidation, made the by-standers comprehend that the gentleman who had been his fellow-traveller was shot. They traced back their way along the road, and there, at about five hundred yards from the place where they apprehended Hanningham, discovered the lifeless body of Vernon, who had been shot through the head, and could not have survived the wound an instant."

"Through his head!" said Moss; "which side—eh?"

"That next to Hanningham," said Maxwell.

"More awkward still," said Godfrey.

"The search for the pistols was next proceeded in," said Maxwell; "for when the gig was stopped, no such weapons were found in it; while Hanningham, who admitted, perhaps needlessly, perhaps unintentionally, in the hurry and confusion of the moment, that his pistols were on the floor of the gig when they started, said he concluded, that on the fall of Vernon from the vehicle, and the desperate plunge the horse gave when alarmed by the shot, they must have fallen on the ground. This suggestion was followed by an immediate search along the road; when at about a distance of twenty yards from the body, and within four yards of each other, the identical pistols were found — one loaded with ball, and the other, having been recently discharged."

"That's worst of all," said Godfrey.

"Listen," said Kate; "for I assure you, I am deeply

interested; and although I know the facts by heart, I always watch the narrative in the hope of catching some new point upon which to exonerate the man I believe to have been innocent."

"Considering that he has been hanged more than a twelvemonth, I think the balm to the wound comes too late — but go on," said Godfrey.

"Hanningham was conveyed to town, and an examination took place the next day. The turnpike men, at Newington, deposed, that they heard the prisoner and another person using most violent language to each other as they drove through the gate. That they knew the prisoner by sight perfectly well, from his constantly passing and repassing. It was also shown in evidence, that it was usually the custom of Hanningham to take a groom with him and Vernon on their return to the country; but that on this particular night Hanningham had, contrary to that custom, told the man to remain in town, as he should not want him. Upon this evidence he was committed."

"Pretty strong too," said Moss.

"On the trial, the corroborating circumstances of his guilt were more conclusive; and the details, some of which I forget, formed such a complete piece of circumstantial evidence against him, that the jury seemed hardly disposed to wait for his defence."

"What *was* his defence?" said Moss.

"Why rather a weak one, I admit," said Maxwell. "He stated that they had been attacked by either footpads or highwaymen, he could not tell which — that he did not see the person or persons — that the shot fired appeared to come from behind him — but that there was no previous attempt to rob them, and that he could give no other account of the affair.

"The servant who had been directed for that night to remain behind, contrary to the usual custom, proved that he had loaded the pistols, and put them, as they were always put, under the seat on which his master sat and drove.

"The excitement was, as you may remember, so great," continued Maxwell, "that one dare scarcely express a

thought of Hanningham's innocence. The indignation of the jury, which unhesitatingly returned a verdict of Guilty, appeared to communicate itself to the judge, who, in passing sentence, in the most elaborated manner, inflicted pangs more terrible than death upon the prisoner; and Hanningham was executed on the top of Horsemonger Lane prison, on the following Monday."

"And he never confessed?" said Godfrey.

"On the contrary," said Kate, "his last breath was spent in making the most fervent and solemn asseverations of his innocence. Asseverations to which the purity and excellence of his previous life gave great weight with unprejudiced persons. They had none, however, in the official quarter, and the law took its course."

"I recollect," said Moss, "the day of the execution was a tremendously stormy day—I remember it quite well."

"No matter," said Maxwell, "I should not have touched upon the subject, but that I wish you to like young Hanningham; and as you see that the whole case turned upon circumstantial evidence, the chances are—at least so I think—that his father suffered innocently—and I for myself believe that to be the case: but you must promise, should we live to meet again, in a quiet home of our own, never to make the slightest allusion to the circumstance in Hanningham's presence."

"Me,—no," said Moss; "leave me alone—I may talk to the faculty of killing their patients, and such trash as that, but that's only a capital joke—a capital punishment is another thing altogether."

"And pray," said Kate, "how have you become so intimate with our medical adviser here?"

"Cottoned to *me*, Kate," said Moss:—"I wasn't right, so I had some of his physic—never could persuade him to accept of any money—took it all out in my society; and so whenever I have been here, he has first fed me gratis till he has made me ill, and then physicked me for nothing till he made me well."

"A very agreeable system," said Maxwell: "if he has

many patients on the same terms his profits must be wonderful."

"He has taken a partner," said Moss, "one that looks after the two-pences. I hate him—a cretur that would live upon the white of an egg on Monday; on the yolk, Tuesday; and eke out his Wednesday's dinner with broth made of the shell. When he came in, out came a bill to me, as long as your arm—two draughts and pill, five shillings; ditto, ditto, five shillings—so I goes to my doctor and shows him the 'little account' as his cretur of a partner called it. 'I'll settle that,' said Squillums, and away he goes into the parlour, behind a green curtain, and tells this chap that I am a friend, and never pays on no account whatsoever. What do you think this young parsnip-faced puppy says?—Oh! says he, 'If he is a friend, of course he shall go on on the old terms; only we had better contrive to drop him into powders—bottles cost money'—did you ever hear of such a cretur?"

"Has the doctor, as you call him, any family?" said Kate.

"Two daughters," said Moss—"one fair, delicate, and good natured; the other dark, fiery, and a she wit. I call her his black dose, and her sister, his mild emulsion—eh, Mack?"

"Your technicalities are capital, Mousetrap," said Maxwell; and scarcely had he said it, when the door of the little drawing-room opened, and exhibited to their sight the identical parent of the two medicinal Venuses, who, resolved to satisfy his suspicions as to the destination of Godfrey Moss, made a merit of a second visit to his fair and convalescent patient.

"Why, Medicus!" cried Moss, as he entered the room.

"Why, Mr. Moss!" exclaimed Squills; "upon my word, you are very snug and comfortable. I don't wonder now at your anxiety to quit my house. You, madam," continued he, addressing Kate, and looking at the punch-making apparatus on the table, "seem to know the way to Mr. Moss's heart."

"I have so long been accustomed to his fancies," said

Kate; and then suddenly recollecting herself, she looked exceedingly silly and very red.

"I did not know," said the Galen of Ryde, "that you were acquainted with Mr. Martin—the ——"

"Martin—bou!" said Moss.

"My dear friend," said Maxwell, who clearly perceived that the potion Moss had been swallowing had added to his communicativeness, in an equal proportion to the diminution of his discretion, "we have met before, and I hope we shall continue to meet."

"I only meant to say," said Squills, "that when I mentioned your name to Mr. Martin, he did not seem to recollect it; and when I mentioned Mr. Martin's name to you, you were equally at a loss."

"Come, Pillbox," said Moss, "take a glass of this. Oh, I'll mix it for you; Maxwell don't care for the sugar and water, and the ginnums is ——"

"Maxwell!" said Squills, "then I *am* right. Now I recollect, sir, to have had the honour of being once in your company before, and I am now in the presence of one of the most eminent men in the profession. I ——"

"Indeed, sir," said Kate, "my father — I — that is ——"

"Oh, stuff, gammon, trash!" said Moss, "it's all my fault; but that cretur is as close as a poor-box. Mack, you know what secret-keeping is — never tattle — it *is* Maxwell. All my doing: I never was good at a mystery — old friend of mine — I ——"

"I feel myself sadly humiliated," said Maxwell, "by this discovery. Misfortunes inevitable, and no fault of my own, have rendered this temporary disguise necessary. You are now aware of it — I am sure I may confide in your honour."

"That you may, sir," said Squills; "if the feeling that I have been put into possession of a secret accidentally did not of itself bind me, the admiration and respect I entertain for your high character and qualities would of themselves secure you from the consequences of any indiscretion of mine."

"Well said, Bolus," exclaimed Moss, who was so elated

by the sight of the Maxwells and the spirit of Yelf's gin, that it was with great difficulty his liveliness could be subdued to the moderate tone which it was absolutely necessary to adopt in so small and fragile a building as Melrose Cottage.

Moss, in the course of the conversation, recapitulated all the misdeeds of Apperton, and then avowed the fact that Miss Martin was in fact the wife of the nefarious exile. "Faith," said Moss, "it was your account of Miss Martin's wedding ring, and the name of Kate, that gave me the first clue to my old and excellent friends."

In social converse passed the evening: the Ryde practitioner forgot all the other patients whom he had said he had to visit; and when his little boy, in a glazed hat, with a basket on his arm, came and said his master was wanted by a lady, Squills sent a short message — the lady being his wife — to say he could not come; and partook, with great satisfaction and a sea-side appetite, of the small cold collation which was prepared for Mousetrap.

Maxwell, after the departure of his visiters, expressed to his daughter his great regret at the strange communicativeness of Moss, upon a point so closely connected, as he believed, with his personal security; however, it relieved him of a constant nervousness and restraint before the apothecary, who was the only inhabitant of Ryde, with the exception of Moss himself, they were likely to see during their stay there.

In London, things of more vital importance were transacting. There, Hanningham was devoting himself to unravelling the tangled meshes of Maxwell's affairs. He saw the only lawyer the surgeon knew professionally; but he being of the first class of solicitors, turned up his nose at "common law;" and, morever, had never been consulted by Maxwell, whose high opinion of his worthy son-in-law, added to an idea, instilled into his mind by that respectable individual, that secrecy was absolutely necessary to the ultimate success of their schemes and expedients, had induced the innocent old gentleman to suffer himself to be robbed, literally robbed, of every thing he possessed in the world, without interposing even a remonstrance or repairing to a human being for counsel or advice.

The great difficulties which presented themselves to Hanningham, appeared to him to be certain outstanding acceptances, for which Maxwell had rendered himself liable, beyond the total destruction of his actual property. It was of course a matter of the first importance to ascertain where and in whose possession these securities actually were, and what were the feelings and dispositions of the holders towards the unfortunate acceptor. Some bonds also of Maxwell's were extant; but it seemed that nobody knew exactly where they were deposited.

One event had occurred, for which neither the Maxwells nor Hanningham were at all prepared. A half-brother of Apperton's, it turned out, had been apprehended, tried, and convicted of some active participation in the nefarious proceedings of his relative, and was, at the moment of the arrival of the party from Madeira, in Newgate under sentence of transportation. It was from the report of the trial of this man, that Hanningham was best enabled to understand the extent of the villany of Apperton, who it appeared, in his career of infamy, had not stopped short even of forgery. The reader may, perhaps, not feel so sorry for the fate of his worthy colleague, who was merely waiting an order to remove from Newgate to New South Wales, when he is told that it was the identical Biddle whose insolence had so outraged the feelings of the Maxwells while they were staying at Brighton.

To this person Hanningham determined to apply himself, in order, if possible, to obtain some clue to the actual possessor of poor Maxwell's securities; and, accordingly, he proceeded to the prison where he was confined, and with very little difficulty succeeded in obtaining an interview with him.

The events which had occurred during the last few months had made but little alteration in his manner, although his dress was slovenly, and his inattention to appearance rather remarkable. Hanningham obtained admission to him without announcing either his name or business, and addressed him with great civility, informing him that he wished for a few moments' conversation.

"Well, sir," said the fellow, flippantly and impertinently

enough; "whose business is it about — mine or yours? because it will make an uncommon deal of difference in my disposition to talk, if it should be any thing about myself. Any change in my destination? for between you and I, sir, I think I am infinitely too sharp a fellow to be sent to Botany Bay, whatever you may think."

"My mission here," said Hanningham, "is not connected with any alteration in your fate, I am sorry to say; but as you are, doubtless, well acquainted with the affairs of Mr. Apperton, and I am very much interested about them, I wished to ask, as you can do him no harm by being explicit, nor do yourself any good by maintaining silence upon certain points, whether you would be disposed to give me some information with respect to certain bonds and bills, and other liabilities, in which Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Apperton's father-in-law, is said to be seriously involved."

"Will you allow me to ask you one question?" said Biddle — are you an attorney?"

"I am not," said Hanningham; "I am a merchant, and interested upon this point, because I have undertaken, at the request of Mr. Maxwell, for whom I have a high regard, to endeavour to trace out the possessors of these documents."

"And where is the proud old dunderheaded doctor at this present time?" said Biddle.

"Mr. Maxwell do you mean, sir," said Hanningham.

"Yes, I do sir," said Biddle: "if it had not been for his proud, overbearing behaviour to me, and the sneers of his vain family, I should never have been here. He and his insulted me, and insulted my half-brother, and I swore I would be revenged; and I am — but I have been caught in my own trap. However, sir, whoever you may be, if I knew where you could lay your hands upon all those papers you want, I would die before you should know. No; I am smashed in the scrape, so is Apperton, and I should be worse than a fool to get old Maxwell clear, while his ruin is the only consolation I have for having been ruined myself."

"But surely," said Hanningham, "a vindictive feeling can have no place in your heart now. I admit, that if any

possible advantage were derivable to yourself by this line of conduct, it would be perfectly excusable ; but consider you are under the sentence of the law, a sentence which nothing can revoke except the exercise of the royal prerogative, which is not likely to be exerted in your favour. Why not release the unhappy victim of Apperton's duplicity from the peril, or at least the apprehension of peril, under which he is suffering ?"

"Suffering !" cried Biddle ; "what did he think of my suffering, when he insulted *me?* What did he think of Apperton's suffering, while he preached up about legitimacy, and honour, and family, and pride? He knew my brother had no right to stand up for family or legitimacy ; but as long as he fancied he could make something out of him, never a word did he say about legitimacy. No ; but the minute he found things had taken an ugly turn, this poor, proud doctor comes out with a long rigmarole about his family. Family, indeed ! he and I were born much alike, with no shoes to our feet ; and deuced glad we both were, when we found a pair of pumps to fit. And it isn't because that old cold-blooded prig chose to put starch in his neckcloth, and eat dry toast for breakfast, that he is to come domineering over me and my blood. No, no, grind him — grind him, is my advice ; and wherever he is, the whole burthen of his bills, bonds, and liabilities, be upon him."

"I am sorry to see you so much irritated, sir," said Hanningham. "I came as the harbinger of peace, at least I hoped so. I only asked as a favour, that you would relieve a mind already dreadfully agitated, from a load which he has no right to sustain."

"Relieve !" said Biddle. "Why should I relieve him? Here I am, sentenced to transportation — for what ? — trying to save him, and bolster up his credit."

"Surely not Mr. Maxwell's credit," said Hanningham.

"Yes, Mr. Maxwell's credit," replied the other. "Didn't he bolt — abscond — toddle, as they say here ? Well, what was to be done ? — something — and Jack Apperton and I did it : and fourteen years' transportation is the reward of my ingenuity. Why should I set Maxwell's mind at ease,

if I could? No; you tell me where he is, and in four-and-twenty hours he shall be grinning through the bars of a prison, like a panther at Pidcock's. If I saw him rotting — perishing — perishing for want of food, I would not give him the dirtiest crust I would give to a dog, to save him."

"I repeat," said Hanningham, "that I regret that such a spirit should animate you at this moment."

"You regret," said Biddle, "and pray, sir, if you come to that, who is it that I have the honour of talking to? — some sixty-fifth Scotch cousin of the Scotch surgeon, whose pedigree is as long as Queen Elizabeth's at Hatfield, or perhaps even longer, with a marginal note in the middle, 'about this time the world was created;' for old Bess only traces herself back to Adam."

"I, sir," said his companion, "have not the honour to be related at all to Mr. Maxwell, but I stand closely connected with him in the degree of friendship; I respect him, I esteem him, I love him; but I am not connected with him. My name, sir, is Hanningham."

"Hanningham," said Biddle, with a look of triumph. "Hanningham! — not related to the murderer — to the wretch who was hanged at Horsemonger Lane gaol — the fellow who shot his partner — no connection of his, I suppose, sir."

"I have done," said Hanningham. "If the sins of fathers are to be visited upon their children, it is not by mortal cruelty, nor by the insolence of so black-hearted a villain as yourself. I have never seen such hardened atrocity as you have been pleased to display in this interview; but the day will come when you will repent — at least I hope so. I shall not trouble you farther; but merely express my regret that you are so debased and so degraded, that I dare not vindicate the memory of an injured and misrepresented parent by a summary process, the nature of which I leave you to surmise."

Had poor Hanningham had the proper and reasonable control of his feelings, he would not have condescended even to be angry with such a wretch as this convict; but there are moments when the most placid and best regulated

amongst us lose the equilibrium of temper, and descend almost to a level with their base and guilty antagonists, upon points like that upon which the convicted felon had dwelt.

Hanningham was so much excited, so dreadfully agitated at the recurrence to his unhappy father's fate, that it was with difficulty he could keep himself from fainting — and if he had not been suffered to go into one of the open yards, where the prisoners take exercise, he would, in all probability, have sunk under the operation of his mingled feelings.

One of the turnkeys opened a door which gave him admission to one of those spaces, and he availed himself of the circumstance to inhale a little of the thick atmosphere of London — but it was with difficulty that he kept himself steady enough, to see what was passing around him.

He stood in the midst of convicts under sentence of death, but who had not yet been reported — yet even here he received kinder treatment and more sympathy from his companions, who saw that he was violently agitated, than he had experienced in his interview with the hardened villain Biddle — and what reflections flashed into his mind! He saw squalid misery — poor wretches manacled and allowed the benefit of air, merely to sustain life, until the law, which had declared it forfeit, should reach its maturity and take it; and, oh! how were those feelings magnified, when he recollected that a parent whom he adored, and who, if he had not undergone the tedious preparation for death which those for minor crimes are permitted to suffer, had expiated a still greater atrocity in pursuance of a verdict given by a jury, precisely as that had been delivered, by the force of which these manacled miscreants before him had been doomed to die.

Pale, trembling, and dreadfully agitated, he looked round him, as the small modicum of air which finds admission into a highly walled yard of a prison refreshed him, and he beheld the crowd of victims to offended justice walking, laughing, and talking, as if they were either uncertain of their fate, or careless of the event. What a picture! To think that every one of those doomed to perish by the

hands of the common executioner, had been nursed, and fondled, and loved, and praised to the very echo, by his fond father and doting mother — the pain, the perils, that his parents had undergone to rear him; the anxious watchings of his innocent slumbers; the affectionate kiss with which at night they had laid him to rest; the smile, the laugh, — his little playful efforts to speak — the joy that beamed in their eyes as he made progress, and could pronounce the endearing word, "father," or "mother" — and then to see the same beings hardened in guilt — the victims of vice — marks for the law's aim — retributive sacrifices upon the altar of offended justice. It was an awful sight; and with nerves attuned as Hanningham's were — he whose father had expiated upon a scaffold the worst of crimes, and was perhaps almost the worst of murderers; it was not a scene in which it was likely he should regain health and strength.

As he sat on a stone bench and drank some water which the turnkey brought him, several of the culprits came round him — some with a confused idea of hope that he was another added to those already marked out for punishment; others because they thought his coming might be connected with some mitigation of their punishment; but amongst them, there was one, a short, thick-set man, whose beard and whiskers were long and shaggy, whose eye rolled — "in a fine frenzy," — and who fixed his looks most intently upon the new comer. He enquired of the turnkey why the gentleman was there, and the turnkey explained that he was merely "an *amateur*."

"Do you know his name?" said the man.

"No," said the turnkey.

"I think *I* do," said the culprit; "and I should like to speak to him."

"As you think proper," said the turnkey.

The man walked up to the form where Hanningham was sitting, and placing his finger upon his lip, again scrutinised him with a degree of interest far beyond the ordinary excitement of curiosity.

Hanningham felt uneasy at his situation, and rose from his seat to quit the yard — the short, thick-set man fol-

lowed him: he was near the gate — the man touched him — Hanningham turned.

"Your name is Hanningham," said the short, thick-set man; "is it not?"

"It is," said Hanningham.

"Did you never see me before?" said the man; "or am I so altered that you have forgotten me?"

Still Hanningham did *not* recollect him.

"Do you remember Hall?" said the short, thick-set man.

"Hall — my father's clerk!" said Hanningham,—"to be sure I do."

"I am Hall," said he — and the moment he said so, Hanningham recollected him; but so changed, so altered, that he might have passed him in the streets a thousand times without having been recognised by him.

"What brought *you* here?" said Hanningham.

"Forgery, Mr. Hanningham," said Hall: "my die is cast, nothing can save me — there is a good deal of delay in reporting convicts — but my fate is certain. Come this way a little. It must be Providence, and Providence alone, that sent you here. I never could, never should have had courage to do, what, please God, I *will* do, if I had not seen you — but what is to be, is ——"

"What do you mean, Hall?" said Hanningham.

"Oh, mercy, mercy! Mr. Hanningham," said Hall, apparently agonised beyond the power of endurance. "If you knew — if you could suppose — half my villany, you would strike me dead at your feet; but I am resolved upon my course — it shall be done. Yet, how dare I, how can I, look upon you, and recollect the dreadful, damning injury I have done you!"

"What injury?" said Hanningham.

"Your father — your father," said Hall — "died upon the scaffold — I —— oh, mercy on me!"

"Come, come," said the turnkey, "time's up, gentlemen, I must trouble you to go in."

The crowd of convicts obeyed the command, but Hall lingered.

"Come, Mr. Hall," said the man.

"I will," said he, "but this must not be the last meet-

ing we have — I cannot die as it is — I must see you — I must tell tell you something — dreadful, most dreadful — but you shall hear it. It is all I can do; all the atonement I can make in this world. When will you come?"

"To-morrow," said Hanningham, "at the earliest hour permitted."

"To-morrow, let it be," replied Hall. "If the report goes up, I shall be ordered for execution. — Sha'n't I, Tom?" continued he, addressing the turnkey.

"Why let 's hope for the best, Mr. Hall," said the turnkey — "there 's nothing unpossible to Providence, except gunpowder ashes; and you may be spared — but I don't think it likely — you are a deuced sight too clever to live."

"What a flattering fellow it is!" said Hall, addressing himself to Hanningham: — "well then, to-morrow at twelve."

"I will be punctual, rely upon it," said Hanningham.

"It will be a load of a million weight off my guilty heart," said Hall — "and you must hear it — you *shall* hear it. Good day, sir — I daren't look at you — but I say again, it was Providence sent you here, to confirm my determination upon this point — now it must and shall be done. A man has but one neck, let the number of his crimes be what they may — good day, good day."

Saying which, the wretched man returned to his companions in guilt and misery, and Hanningham, heart-sick of the whole scene, got out of the prison as fast as he could, and repaired to the hotel where he had established himself and his fair lady on their first arrival in England.

CHAPTER VIII.

Now death draws near, a strange perplexity
Creeps coldly on me — like a fear to die.
Courage uncertain dangers may abate,
But who can bear th' approach of certain fate?
The wisest and the best some fear may show,
And wish to stay; — though they resolve to go. DRYDEN.

THE remainder of the day, the beginning of which Hanningham had passed in the prison, hung heavily on hand,

such was his desire to be informed upon the important matters which Hall declared he had to communicate; indeed, if the truth were told, even his anxiety with respect to Maxwell, and his indignation at the callous villany of Biddle's conduct, yielded to his personal interest in the latter affair. His thoughts once glanced at the possibility of his father's innocence of crime; but how that could now be established, or if it were established, of what avail it could be, except, indeed, as rescuing his memory from obloquy, it would be difficult to understand.

On this latter point, candid and communicative as he always was to the amiable woman whom his lucky stars had given him for a wife, he maintained a perfect silence; a proceeding which added very considerably to the difficulty of his position. She, who watched every turn of his countenance, and had learned to comprehend his very thoughts and feelings by its workings, was quite aware that he was agitated by something more than he had spoken of. The vagueness, however, of his suspicions and expectations with regard to the communications to be made by Hall induced him to maintain a perfect silence on the subject.

It was evident that from Biddle he could gain no assistance in the unravelling of Maxwell's affairs, and he determined that he would make no farther attempts in a quarter where he had been repulsed in a manner which he could not brook; and whence, even if he could have submitted to the fellow's violence and insolence, it was quite clear no information, that they could with any degree of certainty depend upon, could be obtained. He wrote to Maxwell, and communicated to him the ill success of his mission, and his apprehension that, from the spirit of animosity which seemed to exist in the minds and tempers of Apperton's connections, nothing but vexation and embarrassment were to be expected from the conduct they would pursue. He advocated in his letter the continuance of their concealment, at all events for some days; and having heard since his arrival of their discovery of Moss in the Isle of Wight, he felt assured that the inconvenience of restraint would be considerably alleviated by the presence of that

eccentric personage, and was confident in Maxwell's perseverance in the cautious system which he had adopted.

The reader may, perhaps, recollect that when we last heard of Charles Somerford, he was on the point of proceeding to the West Indies with his regiment from Ireland. He had long since departed, and having done what was considered necessary for effecting the exchange he desired, had returned to his native country; not, however, without having suffered considerably by indisposition during his short stay in the island to which he was destined. His grief at finding, on his arrival in England, that his worst anticipations with regard to Lady Emily Denham's health had been realised, and the feeling which he could not entirely overcome, that he had been, perhaps innocently, the cause of the melancholy event, seriously affected him. He made immediate enquiries where Lord Lessingham was residing: doubtful, however, whether the old nobleman would wish to see the individual who had sealed the fate of his beloved Lady Emily, by his decided adherence to a line of conduct which his lordship had before stigmatised as worse than foolish. Yet his gratitude for past kindness, and a thousand scarcely definable feelings, led him to desire once again to see the friend whose generous reception of him, and whose noble disinterestedness as regarded his lovely grandchild, had entirely gained his affection, and secured his eternal gratitude.

Charles was not long without information on this point. On his arrival in London, he found a letter awaiting him at the agent's, from the venerable peer, who had returned to his residence in the vicinity of London. Perhaps it may as well speak for itself, and give the reader an opportunity of judging the feelings by which it was dictated, and of imagining the consequences to which it might lead. It ran thus: —

"Richmond, —— ——

"Dear Somerford,

"Your return to England, according to the accounts I have received of you, may be shortly expected. I look forward to it with anxiety and impatience. I have lost my treasure — the beloved of heart is gone! — my adored Emily is in heaven! and I am left a lone, wretched, child-

less, isolated being! I cannot endure society; I cannot gain courage sufficient to mingle with the world, and I feel too surely that I shall sink under the weight of my afflictions.

"To your return I look forward as the only event likely to afford me consolation—your presence is absolutely necessary to my comfort and the repose of my mind. At first the association of ideas which cannot fail to connect you in my mind with the angel who is gone will be painful—bitterly painful; but that will subside, and I shall feel calmed and soothed in the society of one who was so dear to her.

"I am the more anxious that you should receive this letter as soon as you reach London, because I apprehend that the anxiety I felt upon the great object of my life, when we discussed it together, might have induced me to drop some expressions with respect to your self-devotion to the object of your first love, of a much harsher character than your conduct in that affair warranted or justified. You have behaved nobly; and although I am doomed to suffer deeply for the strength of your resolution, I cannot but admire the steadiness of principle which actuated your behaviour. I spoke harshly of your friends, the Maxwells: they do not deserve it, and I gladly retract any thing that might have given you uneasiness upon that point. I lamented the consequences of your decision, and was actuated in the strongest manner possible to endeavour to shake it. I believe Mrs. Apperton to be a lady of the most amiable disposition; and although I cannot altogether comprehend the strong measures which Maxwell adopted to separate you and his daughter, nor entirely admit the judiciousness, on her part, of accepting another suitor, still there are allowances to be made. You were poor and unknown, and the circumstance connected with the birth of your mother, although of course wholly uncontrollable by you, operated on his mind, not to your disadvantage, but, as parents habitually see in their children qualities which eyes less intimate with their merits do not always perceive, he anticipated for *her* rank and fortune, which, whatever might be your eventual success, it was extremely improbable you could give her, until you had passed the period of life at which her marriage would be desirable.

"I am now arguing favourably upon points which I considered differently before, in order to show you that I am ready to admit my error, and anxious to meet you with no apprehension on your part of hostility on mine to the line you have taken with regard to your vow of constancy. Come to me, then, as soon as you arrive; you will find my house, my heart, open to receive you. The chief ornament of my domestic circle is gone—the dear, good child of my old age is no longer with me. Soon, very soon, shall I follow her from this troublesome world, with which, and all its follies and vanities, I have done for ever: peaceful retirement is all my aim and object. To you I look as the prop of my declining years; and I invite you to my solitude, not to share it against your will, but to be to me as a son, during the short remaining period of my existence.

"To the world this might seem romantic, and the satisfaction I anticipate in your society as the beloved of my poor Emily, equivocal. But no; her affections have formed a link between us which I cannot break; and I shall find myself doing honour to her memory, and showing my attachment to her, by forwarding your views and your interests, and proving myself, as I really am,

"Your devoted friend,

"LESSINGHAM."

There could be no question as to the conduct Charles was to pursue, upon the receipt of this extraordinary kind letter; indeed, he found from the date of it, that it had been some time awaiting him at the agent's office, and heard, moreover, that since its despatch Lord Lessingham had been extremely ill, and was actually at that moment confined to his bed. Not an hour was to be lost in replying to such a bidding, by a personal visit to his lordship; and accordingly, having as speedily as possible made the necessary arrangements for his proceeding to Richmond, our returned soldier repaired to the presence of his kind and generous, although somewhat eccentric, patron and friend.

He found Lord Lessingham not in bed, but stretched on a couch—so changed in the short time which had elapsed since they last met, that is was with difficulty he could

trace the noble expression of hie countenance in the pale and withered face before him.

The old nobleman's emotions, when Charles was first announced, were painful beyond expression: he sobbed aloud, and the tears chased each other down his furrowed cheek. "I knew," said he, "this would be a dreadful trial. Thank God you are come, Charles!—Charles, I have lost her—she is gone from me—there, there, see her books—her work—all as they used to be—but she is in her grave!"

"Pray endeavour to compose yourself, my lord," said Charles.

"No, no," said Lord Lessingham; "I am too weak to struggle with my feelings; let them have way—I shall be better soon. Poor child!—See, Charles," continued the old man, "see here, her favourite dog knows you—fawns on you—welcomes you—*he* has not forgotten you! Oh, Charles Somerford! it was a sad trial for an old man—to lose so kind, so dear, so fond a being as she was—but God's will be done!"

"Shall I leave you for a little, my lord?" said Charles; who was apprehensive of danger from the violence of his noble host's agitation.

"No, no; sit you down," said Lord Lessingham: "we will talk all this over calmly and reasonably by and by. Human weakness must be forgiven. Tell me, when did you arrive in London?"

"This morning," said Somerford; "scarcely two hours since. The moment I found your lordship's letter, I hastened to acknowledge it in person."

"And you accept my proposition?" said his lordship; "you will consent to make this your home, while you remain in town or its vicinity?"

"I can make but one reply," said Charles, "to so much kindness."

"I cannot endure society," said Lord Lessingham. "Time, they say, softens sorrows, and wears down afflictions; but at present I seek only the company of one who knew her well, and who will talk of her with me. I see nobody who calls, and I have looked forward to the day of

your return, as the only point at which a hope of consolation could be afforded me."

"Now," said Somerford, "that I have gone on the half-pay, my military duties will not, at all events for the present, interfere with the scheme of comfort which your lordship proposes."

"Your military duties," said Lord Lessingham; "of those I think very little. You may, I think, retire altogether from the army, unless the external distinctions of a soldier have any charms for you."

"I have no other profession, my lord," said Somerford; "my sword is all I have to live by."

"Promises are sometimes thoughtlessly made," said Lord Lessingham, "and heartlessly broken. Here we cannot control the things most essential to our happiness; but, as far as worldly concerns go, it may be as well to tell you, that your fortune will need no professional aid to ensure your competence and affluence for the future."

"My lord," said Charles, "how have I deserved this splendid liberality?—it is impossible I should consent——"

"The time will come, Somerford," said Lord Lessingham, "and that shortly, when I shall, I hope, be able to induce you to obey my wishes on that point without hesitation. I stand alone in the world, the last of my race — my title extinct at my death, but my fortune is at my disposal. I am not strong enough now to go into details, which I intend you shall hear; but to-morrow, perhaps — soon it must be, or never — I will open all my plans for your future advancement to you. At present, my head throbs, and I am unable to talk farther upon a subject which so deeply interests me."

Somerford saw but too plainly that Lord Lessingham was indeed too weak to pursue the subject on which he had touched; but his astonishment at what he had already heard was extremely great. It seemed to him one of the most extraordinary turns in fortune that ever had occurred: the first friendship and affection which his lordship had exhibited towards him were gratifying in the highest degree, and appeared very extraordinary; but when, after offering him such a treasure as his adored grandchild — after his

proposal had been rejected — after the fatal consequence which had ensued, and which it was evident the venerable nobleman, by implication at least, attributed to Somerford's disinclination to accept the proffered hand and fortune of Lady Emily, and when, after having expostulated in no very gentle terms with him upon his conduct, in adhering to his self-imposed obligation of fidelity to Mrs. Apperton, they had parted as if they were never more to meet — he found himself cordially and earnestly invited to the house which he had voluntarily quitted, and selected by its noble master, not only as his companion and friend, but, as it should seem, the future possessor of much of his fortune — it seemed little short of a miracle. Medical men, or commissioners of lunacy, would perhaps have had their ideas drawn into some other channel, and have arrived at some more worldly and physical conclusion. As it was, Charles had only to wonder and be grateful; for what he had just heard, made him recur to Katherine and her charms, with a solid satisfaction perfectly new to him. If she were released from her unhappy thraldom, he would be able to give her such an establishment as might secure her comfort, and render her father free from difficulties and embarrassments, and restore him to his former place in society.

These things were all in progress, while the Maxwells, unconscious of them, had been wearing down the days of their exile in Madeira, and on the voyage homewards, *via* Fayal; and although parted still farther by circumstances than space or distance, not a day passed — scarcely an hour — without the mind of either of these devoted individuals being filled with the thoughts of the other. Katherine, it must be admitted, looked forward to the future with less hopes of happiness than Charles — she did not know how solemnly he had bound himself to her by a compact to which, as he had told Lord Lessingham, she was no party. She fancied she saw him surrounded by gaieties, involved in dissipation, and tempted into society, where his manners and accomplishments could not fail to have their influence, and in which it was most likely he would form some matrimonial engagement; for she felt that she deserved to lose him, and expected fully to meet her reward.

Little did she think how much more dangerous his position actually had been than she anticipated. The heartless frivolity of the gay saloon, the scuffling of the waltz, the clatter of the gallope, or the kickings of the Mazurka, with all the allurements of beauty and dress in full display, are not a thousandth part so perilous to constancy, as the retired quietude of shady walks and moonlight groves, in the company of one dear individual. All Somerford's firmness had been required to withstand the influence of the lovely syren with whom he had been so long and so intimately associated; but principle had triumphed, and his fidelity came from the ordeal purer and brighter than ever.

When they returned to England, Kate, as I have already (perhaps needlessly) said, was most anxious to hear some intelligence of him; but the arrears of newspapers since their last accounts were too voluminous to wade through, in the hope of seeing any thing about him; and she was fearful of asking Moss, lest she should incur a fire of jokes and banters upon her smouldering passion. At length, however, she contrived to induce her father to lead the conversation in that direction.

"What's gone with the cretur?" said Moss, "why, he is gone to the West Indies—that's the last I heard of him: got into some love scrape at Cheltenham with a lord's granddaughter, and his lordship took the liberty of showing him the door — bowed him out. Master Charley did not know that in marriage as well as in murder, blood will have blood, and so he thought to carry off my lady and a fortune; but the cretur was well served, and turned off without a character."

"Are you sure," said Katherine, "that yours is the true version of that history?"

"I don't know how true it is," said Moss, "I heard it from somebody, I forget where, that knew I knew something of the cretur; and that's what they told me, and that he was forced to set off and look after the nigger boys, with the woolly tops, in consequence."

"And natural enough, too," said Maxwell: "Somerford has no pretensions to such a connection; and I must say it smatters a little of vanity his attempting to form it."

"But do you believe he did, sir?" said Kate.

"Why should people invent such stories?" said Maxwell.

"I, for one, discredit it," said Katherine.

"To be sure you do," said Moss.

"'If you loves I as I loves you,
No knife shall cut our loves in two'—

eh! — Kittums! don't you fancy yourself sure of his heart?"

"Whose heart?" said Maxwell; "what has Kate to do with any body's heart — has not she a husband?"

"Thanks to you, Master Mack, she has," said Moss, "and a nice bargain she has got of him."

"On that point, Moss, pray let us have no discussion," said Maxwell; "what I did, I did for the best. We are blind, fallible creatures, and I was deceived; but the ruin of my fortune and my respectability has gone hand in hand with the wreck of her happiness, and so, however much I may reproach myself, I do not escape with impunity for my credulity."

"You have nothing to reproach yourself with, my dearest father," said Katherine: "the choice was my own, and I was quite old enough to decide for myself, and quite competent, if I had wished it, to refuse Apperton. I did not do so; and whatever the consequences have been, you, as well as myself, are innocent of them; and so let us endeavour to avoid all discussion of a subject to which it is worse than useless to recur."

It was after this conversation had taken place that Maxwell received the letter from Hanningham, describing the interview which he had had in prison with Biddle, and expressive of his apprehensions, too well founded, that no aid or assistance in their embarrassments was to be expected from that source. The subsequent conversation he had had with the *ci-devant* clerk of his father, Hanningham did not mention,—his anxiety and expectation had been so powerfully excited, by the address and manner of the culprit, that he dared scarcely trust himself with thinking on the subject, lest he should be led into some expression of his feeling, which might betray the extent of his hopes and wishes upon

the point — but certain it is, that hours never passed so slowly with him, as those which intervened between two o'clock of one day and twelve o'clock of the next.

At length, however, the moment arrived for his interview with Hall; and as he paced the streets towards the prison where he was confined, Hanningham was scarcely conscious of the act of walking — his heart beating with hope and expectation.

He arrived — was admitted — but when Hall met him, it seemed that some change had taken place in his intentions since they had parted — he appeared gloomy — almost sulky, and by no means communicative.

"Well, Mr. Hall," said Hanningham, "I am here to fulfil our engagement of yesterday."

"I see, sir," said Hall, "but I have been thinking, since you were here yesterday, that, in the present state of my circumstances, I might do myself a serious injury by what I proposed to say, without doing you any good. While there's life there is hope, Mr. Hanningham: if I put my design into execution, there will be no hope for *me*. I am guilty of the worst of crimes — confessing it would, I know, ease my heart of a great load; but if I should escape for what I am now here for, I should be foolish to entail upon myself a capital punishment for an act, of which I am not even suspected."

"I assure you," said Hanningham, "that I have no wish to persuade you to committ or criminate yourself. I came by your own invitation and at your own desire; but if you have altered your mind, and think, upon reconsideration, that it is more prudent to maintain silence, I have done."

"I would give the world," said Hall, "to tell you all — I should be happier; for though I can make no atonement for my guilt, I might make *you* comparatively happy. Come this way," continued he; "here we cannot well be overheard. Oh! Mr. Hanningham, when I look at you, my heart bleeds, villain as I am."

"Calm yourself," said Hanningham.

"I am calm," said Hall; "I am resolved — you shall know all — you ought to know all: but make me a pro-

mise. What I shall tell you will do you no farther good, than that of clearing the reputation of a beloved relative — therefore pledge your honour to me — I ask no more. I knew your father well — too well — too well! I require no other security from a son of his, than his word — pledge your word of honour that you will not reveal what I shall declare to you, until I am dead, or at least so surely doomed to die, that my life cannot be affected by my confession."

"I pledge my honour, that I will never divulge the secret you confide in me," said Hanningham, "until you are dead, or that I am absolved from my promise by yourself."

"That's enough," said Hall — "quite enough — but now — now how shall I have courage to tell you — how shall I dare to incur your hatred, your curses, your bitterest curses, too well deserved by me? Oh! Mr. Hanningham, the progress of crime, the march of villany, is so sure and certain, that the moment the strait path is quitted, the man is lost — play and its allurements, gaieties and frivolities, a love of what is miscalled pleasure — dissipation and libertinism — these have been my ruin — these have brought me here — these made me — a murderer!"

"Murderer!" said Hanningham, his blood curdling as the word passed his lips.

"A murderer — twice a blood-stained murderer," said Hall, clenching his fist and striking his forehead forcibly. "Listen, and hear me unburthen my black and guilty heart — hear my confession — your father was my father's friend — took me into his house, and brought me forward in his business — his confidence in me was unbounded, and I betrayed that confidence, and never was suspected — he took a partner as you know — Vernon."

"Vernon," replied Hanningham, — "too well, too painfully, I know that name."

"Vernon I hated," said Hall; "he suspected me too lustly; the books which I kept were falsified; he discovered the errors I had wilfully made to cover my depredations — your poor father, your excellent father, supported me against his allegations. I became the constant subject

of contention. I was the primary cause of the feuds which disturbed them, until Vernon accused your father, and implied, if he did not actually declare his belief, that he was in league with me to dupe and defraud him. This brought matters to an issue: the consequences I knew would be an immediate and close investigation of the affairs of the firm. One mode of avoiding disgrace and ruin only seemed to present itself; and I resolved upon the commission of a new crime, to escape detection of those of which I had already been guilty. I had no time for deliberation; I looked no farther forward than the moment — I anticipated no consequences, expected no results such as, to my eternal anguish, followed. I — I — it was, Hanningham, that shot Vernon."

"You!" exclaimed Hanningham, "you!"

"I — I!" said Hall: "this hand — this blood-stained hand did it — but what of *that?* Vernon I hated — I was revenged — I am a murderer! — but I killed my victim; and when I saw him fall headlong from the chaise in which he was travelling with your father, I felt a thrill of sanguinary joy and satisfaction at the success of my enterprise."

"But my father!" said Hanningham.

"Ay!" said Hall, "there it is; there is the rankling, galling torture of my heart; that good, that excellent man, my patron, my friend, my more than friend, my second parent, perished for me and my sins — died on a scaffold, amidst the execrations of the people; and I lived on, to act new scenes of vice and villany, and to prove the justice of the adage, that foul deeds will rise, and blood will have blood."

"Mercy on me!" said Hanningham; "do I live to hear this — can this be so?"

"That it is true," said Hall, "you can have little doubt. I have written down a full confession of all this, which I meant to have left behind me at my death; but when I saw you, a feeling I could not check, an impulse that I could not control, compelled me to unburthen my heart to you; to you, the innocent sufferer of my crime — to you, the son of the man I loved — of the man I murdered."

"But how," said Hanningham, who could scarcely speak or stand, such was his agitation; "how came it that my father's pistol was the weapon by which his partner fell?"

"That was my cunning — my contrivance," said Hall; "a contrivance, the full extent of the mischief arising from which, I did not thoroughly consider. The pistols were placed in the chaise by the groom as usual — I was by — the night was dark — I had formed my plan. I took these pistols from the chaise, in order at once to arm myself for the bloody deed I meditated, and to leave those against whom my arm was to be raised, harmless — thus I secured a double object. Your father, assured of the regularity of his favourite servant, never enquired about the weapons, but drove off, convinced they were in their accustomed place. I had mounted my horse — I rode to the spot, which a few days before — on the Sunday too, which I had been spending at your hospitable home — I had selected for the perpetration of the act. Arrived there, I tied my horse to a tree, and waited the coming of my victim, for I sought but one. Vernon and your father were quarrelling still. My misdeeds the object, in all probability, of the altercation, and your father's vindication. I ran behind the chaise, and unobserved, raised myself at the back of it, levelled the pistol at Vernon's head, drew the trigger — and he fell lifeless in an instant on the road — the horse flew forward, alarmed at the noise, and I threw from me the weapon I had so effectually used, and ran to my horse — in my progress thither, I cast away the other pistol, which, with its fellow, formed the damning evidence against the innocent."

"And could you bear to hear my father's guilt proclaimed?" said Hannington. "Could you endure to hear that he died for your crimes?"

"Yes, Hanningham," said Hall; "self-love — the love of life — the dread of punishment — the fear of death — all, conspired to keep me silent, when I heard him doomed to expiate my villany. Oh! would to Heaven I had then done what now I do uselessly! I should have saved an honest man, and I should have saved myself the commission of crimes at which even *I* shudder — I — a murderer! — but stay, stay — what is it? — what 's the matter, Hanningham? — speak!"

The appeal was useless; Hanningham, overcome by his contending feelings, had fallen backwards on the stone bench, where he was sitting, senseless.

"What have I done?" said Hall; "more blood upon my guilty head. Here, here! — help, help!"

His cries soon brought assistance; and some water being procured, Hanningham was shortly recovered and restored to consciousness.

"What was it, sir," said the turnkey, who had been assisting him — "the heat?"

"No," said Hanningham; "it was ——"

"Yes, yes," said Hall, interrupting him; "it was the heat, or the — the gentleman is subject to fits."

"Yes," said Hanningham, seeing immediately that Hall was desirous that nothing more should be said which was likely to tend to a discovery of the real cause of his agitation; "they are very dreadful sometimes. I am better now — I am well, quite well."

The turnkey quitted them again, looking very significantly, and implying, by the expression of his countenance, that he did not quite believe that the agitation in which he found Hanningham was entirely constitutional.

"What wonders Providence works!" said Hanningham; "that I should have come to this place for a purpose so different, and should here meet with one whose confession makes me the happiest being on earth."

"It *would* make me happy," said Hall, "if my confession could restore your poor father to you. The day of his execution will never be forgotten by me — the very elements seemed to suit themselves to the occasion. He might have suffered pangs, as he suffered disgrace; but I defy the power of nature to bear greater torments than I endured during the hour in which I knew he was paying the forfeit of my infamy. Where were you on that day?" said Hall.

"I was out of England," said Hanningham; "I have but recently returned."

"And your poor sister, sir," said Hall; "where is she? — with you?"

"No, not at present," said Hanningham; "she is in the country."

" Ah!" added the culprit, with a look of inexpressible anguish; " it seems but the other day that I was admitted into her society — a guest, a welcome guest, at her father's house. Now, sentenced to the same punishment which my guilt entailed upon *him*. Step by step I went on in vice; and having my hands imbued in blood, all other crimes seemed light to me; and here I am, deserted by the friends who lived on the produce of my villany — despised and rejected even by my associates in guilt!"

" Your own reflections," said Hanningham, " must be the bitterest monitors."

" Yes," replied Hall. " Death will be a relief to me; and yet, as usual, I cling to life. You are now in possession of the great secret which would end all doubt of my fate, and bring my dreadful career to a certain termination. Yet I have bound you (I scarce know why) not to divulge it."

" On that you may rely," said Hanningham: " until I have your permission it passes not my lips. Did you not tell me you had written a confession to the same effect?"

" I did," said Hall; " and *that* you shall possess, to make what use you please of, under the same conditions. If I am ordered to die, you will see the account of the recorder's report; and when that is made, come to me, and you shall have it; and if that is not enough to satisfy other people, bring whom you please, and I'll be as good as my word, and repeat to them all the circumstances I have told to you."

" You will do me the greatest service," said Hanningham; " you will clear the reputation of an injured man, and by so doing counterbalance, in some degree, the crimes you have by your own admission committed."

" I have a long account of guilt to pay for," said Hall; " but of all the things that weigh upon my mind at this time, the wrongful death of your poor father is the one that lies heaviest and nearest my heart. As for Vernon, if he were alive again — again I could ——"

What he was about to declare, it matters not: the dinner-hour for the prisoners had arrived, and he amongst the rest was summoned to the meal. He parted from Hanningham

with a look, the expression of which was rivetted upon his mind, nor could he for the rest of the day drive it from his memory. What Hanningham's feelings were, it would be difficult to describe; for beyond the delight which the exculpation of his much-calumniated father's character, he had another trying feeling to struggle with — he was bound to divulge that exculpation to no human being, until he had the permission of the wretched being whose life might depend upon his adherence to his promise.

His wife — might he not tell *her?* — not even his wife? No; he felt himself so solemnly pledged, that, for the first time since his marriage, he was compelled to keep from her, not only a secret, but a secret the knowledge of which he knew would be productive of real happiness to her.

His proceedings consequent upon the discovery were, therefore, all covert and mysterious. He wrote various letters, and was much occupied in making certain arrangements; but what the contents of those letters were, or to whom they were addressed, his wife knew not. She was piqued at his reserve; but satisfied, when he told her that mystification was, for the present, absolutely necessary, and that in due time she should be put in possession of every point of the story, which for a short period he was bound to conceal.

Hanningham, however, could not conceal the happiness which he had derived from the whole circumstance; and when he recollected the extraordinary chance, as some would call it, that brought him in contact with Hall, he, who considered their meeting the result of something more than accident, returned thanks to Heaven for the providential interference to rescue the memory of his beloved father from opprobrium, and restore a sister, who had shrunk into obscurity and retirement, in consequence of the fatal disgrace which had fallen upon her house, to her proper place and station in society.

How long he was compelled to keep the secret, and what the results of its eventual disclosure were, time will perhaps show.

CHAPTER IX.

I saw no king, no man; save one poor wretch,
Who, sick in bed, lay gasping for his breath:
His eyes, like dying lamps, sunk in their sockets,
Now glared and now drew back their feeble light;
Faintly his speech fell from his falt'ring tongue
In interrupted accents, as he strove
With the strong agonies that shook his limbs,
And writhed his tortured features into forms
Hideous to sight. BELLERS.

THE intelligence which Hanningham had been able to collect for the Maxwells was any thing but satisfactory or consolatory; and although Apperton's connections were people of no importance, still their decided hostility was any thing but agreeable. A low mind, actuated by revenge for a supposed insult — for no people are so proud as those who have the smallest pretensions to be so — never can subside into inaction; and the very fact that one of her sons was to suffer one of the principal punishments which the law awards, on account, as they seemed to think, of his connection with old Maxwell's affairs, would of itself suffice to keep up the animosity of the whole family, in every shape and way in which it might be brought to bear upon Maxwell's relations.

Hanningham, by Maxwell's direction, visited his old residence in Burlington Gardens, which he found occupied by a family, to whom Hanningham introduced himself; and from the head of it, he discovered that he had purchased the lease and furniture of Apperton — a discovery which, though apparently of no great importance in itself, was valuable, inasmuch as it proved that whatever the claims might have been upon Maxwell, which had rendered that property (small as it was relatively to the whole) liable to seizure, they had been satisfied, and that the house and furniture had returned into Apperton's power and possession. It was a professional man who occupied it, and Hanningham could not but regard the different apartments through which he passed with an interest

which those who did not know the inmost workings of his mind could neither have understood or appreciated.

Hanningham then proposed publishing an advertisement, calling upon Maxwell's creditors to come forward with their claims, in order to ascertain the amount of debts, and the disposition of the persons to whom they might be due; a measure which seemed very prudent, inasmuch as Maxwell himself could give no account whatever of the details of his transactions with his son-in-law. His description of the course of conduct which had been pursued was most extraordinary, and scarcely credible to those who do not know that men of first-rate skill and ability in their own peculiar professions, are mostly ignorant of the commonest details of others.

Maxwell explained to Hanningham that Apperton, upon occasions when, as he told him, opportunities occurred by which he might suddenly and extensively increase his capital, would suggest his selling out sums to certain amounts, and buying with the proceeds of such sale shares in the bubble companies which eventually ruined them; that, to the amount of seventy or eighty thousand pounds, he had thus parted with his capital, blindly confiding in Apperton's judgment, and firmly relying upon his honour and integrity: indeed, upon the latter points he never had any doubts to the very last; and when he found himself hurried away from England by the fear of arrest and imprisonment, he felt fully assured that the advice of Apperton was the best, and that no suggestion could be made to benefit his condition, if Apperton was unable to make it.

The other incumbrances,— for the incumbrance of property was gone,— arose, as the old gentleman described it, from acceptances and bonds, which Apperton advised him to give at such periods, as he told him great inconvenience or loss would arise from transferring his property from the funds to other purposes; and these he explained to him were to be cleared off when the objections to selling out were obviated, supposing that before such period the different speculations in which they were engaged should not have themselves afforded the means of settling them; and thus, besides the actual loss of all his earnings, he had be-

come responsible to a large amount — but how large, no recollection of his could serve him to state. It was true, he had kept a book in which he set down these engagements; but that which he left in London when he started for Brighton had never reached him, if it had been secured amongst his private property.

Hanningham, it must be confessed, was more struck by the circumstance of the house having reverted to Apperton, than by any thing which had yet occurred; and he resolved upon putting his plan of calling the outstanding creditors together in execution, in order not only to ascertain what amount of debts still remained unliquidated, but what particular debtors had been satisfied by the proceeds of the sale of the property which the tenant of the town-house in Burlington Gardens had actually purchased of Apperton himself; and accordingly an advertisement was inserted in the newspapers, couched in the usual terms, inviting Maxwell's creditors to come forward, or send an account of their claims against him, to Hanningham's solicitor in Lincoln's Inn.

It is impossible to describe the state of Hanningham's mind during the fortnight or three weeks allotted for the purpose of producing these demands. The Maxwells were, of course, kept in a state of the most feverish suspense; and he, who ought to have been their active agent and indefatigable man of business, was so completely overcome by the intelligence he had received from Hall in the prison, that his wife, who saw how much he was perplexed and absorbed, began to feel serious alarm, lest something, yet unknown to her, had affected him, not wholly disconnected with the subject of Hall's communication, but bearing upon circumstances and events in a totally different manner.

One person presented herself at the solicitor's shortly after the advertisement summoning the creditors appeared in the newspapers; and although no creditor herself, it proved to be a very important person in the way of affording evidence and throwing a light upon the nature of Apperton's transactions subsequently to the departure of Maxwell; this was no other than Mrs. Dawes, whom the

reader may remember as in attendance upon the fugitive family at Portsmouth, and who quitted them when they departed for their exile, only because her age and infirmities kept her at home.

From her description of what had occurred upon her return to London, when she found the sheriffs' officers out of the house in Burlington Gardens, and Apperton established in it, it was quite evident that the execution, from its rapid progress and its sudden announcement, must have been, in point of fact, wholly unnecessary; and the moment that was so far ascertained as Dawes's narrative could substantiate it, a thousand suggestions presented themselves as to the motive which could have induced the abrupt communication of the event, coupled with the unqualified order for their embarkation and flight.

Connected with these circumstances, was the extraordinary attention which prompted Apperton, at a time when he must have been, as one would have thought, wholly occupied with affairs actually going on in London, to prepare every accommodation for their departure, and every facility for their escape. At all events, the combination conjured up suspicions in Hanningham's mind, that the object of Mr. Apperton was rather to frighten away his timid victim than to make the best of what he must have found a bad bargain.

In short, the man of business to whom the advertisement referred the creditors, thought he had found a clue to the unravelment of a great deal which appeared mysterious; and though Hanningham's visit to Biddle in prison had been unavailing, the lawyer fancied that he could insinuate himself like a corkscrew into the mind of the convict, and draw forth *secundum artem* the whole of its contents. What the learned gentleman's skill might have done, or what effect his very specious manner might have produced, it is now impossible to say; for the promising youth, whose conduct at Brighton had so much prepossessed the Maxwells in his favour, was, when the said attorney enquired after him in Newgate, several days distance on his voyage to that vast land, which, in some few years, will emulate the largest republic extant, and become,

like her, a nation of saints and sages, patriots and philosophers—namely, New South Wales.

This channel, from which, to say truth, Hanningham, in spite of the sanguine expectations of his legal friend, anticipated little enlightenment, was therefore cut off; and the only chance left, was in an application to the respectable mother of all the Biddles; but to this measure Hanningham strongly opposed himself, as tending only to circulate the existence of doubts, which it did not seem the least probable that any of the parties would feel inclined to clear up or satisfy.

The first step was to send Dawes down to her ancient master and mistress, who received her at Ryde, with all the welcome that kind hearts appreciating faithful services are likely to feel and exhibit. It was a great consolation to Kate to have her with them, and something like a balm to her wounded spirit, to talk over days that were past; although the account Moss had heard and retailed to her, concerning Somerford's invasion of a noble family, and consequent expulsion therefrom, hindered her from conversing with satisfaction upon the only topic that she loved to dwell upon.

Three weeks elapsed after the insertion of the advertisement, which was the period specified for the production of claims, and no persons appeared to prefer any, except two or three of the minor tradesmen in the neighbourhood of Maxwell's late residence, who were forthwith satisfied; and after this ordeal of his credit, Maxwell began to think he might venture to the metropolis; but Moss, who, though not much versed in the low ways of small lawyers, had a perfect knowledge of mankind, suggested his remaining snug where he was, for some time longer; hinting his belief that the demands had been only postponed until he should show himself, so that his enemies might pounce upon him as soon as he came within their reach; Moss being to this advice most specially moved, not more by the anxiety he felt for the security of his friends than by the comfort he himself experienced during their stay at Melrose Cottage.

But what, all this time, was Edward Maxwell doing at Funchal? What were his sensations, what his anxiety, after

the excitement which the discovery of the picture of his beloved Maria had created? No place remained unsearched, no person unquestioned, as to the history of this mysterious portrait; but all his enquiries were vain, and all the answers he obtained unsatisfactory.

Often and often did he watch the coming vessels, whose broad bows dashing up the foaming wave, he expected to bring a reply to his letters to Hanningham on this subject, which letters scarcely could have reached their destination; and hour after hour did he sit gazing upon the lineaments of her he loved, till he wept with anxiety and disappointment. Hanningham, however, was too deeply interested in matters, to him of vital importance, in England, to pay such prompt obedience to Ned's importunate demands upon the subject as lovers are apt to expect; and lucky it was for the junior partner of the house that something was to occur to relieve the sameness of his occupation, and vary a little the monotony of his existence: but so it was, and for a short time, at all events, his thoughts were drawn into a channel widely different from that in which they had been running since his discovery of the picture.

One fine evening, a ship called the Jonadab Brown, 580 tons, of New York, Amos Franklin, master, arrived in Funchal roads, and let go her anchor in four fathom water. She was bound to Funchal for wine — it should be known that Madeira is the popular beverage in the United States; the pure and patriotic members of which boil it, and ice it, and shake it, and fine it, and do every sort of thing to it, before they drink it; and so superior do they reckon their mode of treatment to that which the said wine meets with any where else, that they absolutely look with contempt upon any Madeira but their own.

The "Jonadab Brown" was a noble looking merchantman, brown sides, taunt masts, square yards, a sharp bow, and a clean counter. No sooner were her stars and stripes seen floating in the evening breeze, than every wine-merchant's heart beat with expectation; glasses were levelled at her from every eminence, in order to make out her private signal, and the Alfandegah was besieged in order to ascertain whence she came and whither she was bound.

A short time only elapsed before Maxwell had the good fortune to discover that she was chartered by a connection of theirs, at New York, and brought a large order to their house. This was the first very extensive shipment he had made since he had been left in administration, and he went assiduously to work, in order to prove to his partner not only his anxiety to do his duty, but his judgment in doing it scientifically.

It would have surprised the idle friends of his earlier days, or even his less dazzling companions in Mr. Diveandpore's shady chambers in Stone Buildings, to have seen the active junior partner of the Madeira house, fagging about the pebbly streets of Funchal in a straw hat and buff-leather shoes, superintending and marking, or causing to be marked, with the peculiar brand of the firm, the various pipes and hogsheads of London Particular, and the smaller casks of Certial Tinta and Malavisa, with a book in his hand and a pen behind his ear. His assiduity and attention not only conferred a great degree of satisfaction on himself, but attracted the marked and "partiklar" attention of Captain Amos Franklin, who having twice, to use the captain's own expression, "tucked his trotters under Maxwell's mahogany," invited his host to "crack a biscuit" aboard the Jonadab Brown; an invitation which Maxwell was extremely well pleased to accept, because, independently of the pleasure which to an unaccustomed eye is derivable from looking over a fine vessel, such as the American first class ships of every denomination are, he would have an opportunity of seeing how they were stowing away the wine; about which, if he did not actually understand very much, it was part of his duty to affect that he did: and accordingly, Captain Amos Franklin, having had his gig backed in to receive the merchant, they proceeded, "somewhere about eight bells, I calkilate," to the beautiful "clipper" lying at anchor in the roads.

The repast was hospitably spread, and well served. Tarapin soup, (a decoction of tortoise flesh,) and canvas-back ducks formed the novelties of the board, and Maxwell did honour to them, although at the expense of his natural feelings. The wine was beyond praise — it was fur-

nished by himself — and the punch, which the steward made after dinner, to wet the cigars, was nectarious. The captain dilated with considerable energy upon the merits of his tobacco, which was pure native Virginia, and which he declared was unquestionably the finest in the whole world, whether for smoking or chewing; an opinion in which, he said, he was supported by all the *ladies* and gentlemen of his acquaintance.

Captain Amos Franklin, after dinner, descanted somewhat at large upon the advantageous state of the "Union;" described the absence of pomp in the president's levees and drawing-rooms, the paucity of his wants, and the scantiness of the means of gratifying his wishes; and concluded a lengthened eulogium upon the state of society, and the freedom of representation, by stating that the qualification for an elector in America was having paid taxes, or worked upon the roads.

This strange definition of right to electoral privileges startled Maxwell, who proceeded to question his friend, and received such extraordinary information on American statistics, that I deeply lament that neither the space I have left to conclude my history, nor the nature of the history itself, will permit my having the pleasure of repeating all the discoveries he made: the conclusion to which he came, however, was, that there is no pride so overweening as that which apes humility, and that, as the march of intellect goes on in the vast community of which Amos Franklin was a worthy member, the wants and wishes of the people will "progress," and that in less than another century, the immense republic of the present day must and will inevitably fall under the dominion of a constitutional monarchy.

"Captain Franklin," said somebody, entering the captain's cabin, "that man is worse this evening — much worse."

"So I guessed he would be," said the captain — "light-headed?"

"No," said the doctor, "calm, but weaker; gradually sinking I reckon; he's tremenduous bad, I calkilate."

"An invalid?" said Maxwell.

"No," said Franklin, "a sick man we have got aboard —he's working his way here afore the mast, but has seen better days, I consider. He's an Englishman; but seems slick out of his element at sea."

"He has been talking," said Mr. Slaughter, (so was the ship's surgeon called,) "about Mr. Maxwell, the merchant here."

"Of *me?*" said Maxwell.

"I ask your pardon, sir," said Slaughter, "I was not aware ——"

"Oh, say nothing about it, I beg," said Edward, "but what does he know of *me?*"

"I cannot guess," said Slaughter; "but when he was laid out on the forecastle for air, and the launch was alongside with the pipes marked with Maxwell—I ask pardon —your name branded on them, he seemed quite in a taking, and swore, and raved."

"May I see this person?" said Edward.

"You may indeed," said Franklin, "and do what you like with him for me; for a more useless beast never had I aboard the Jonadab Brown. When he were quite well, he wa'n't worth his salt, and now he's so tarnation sick, he's a precious sight worse than no use at all whatsoever."

It struck Maxwell, that by the interest this man appeared to take in his name, he might be some fellow victim of his poor father in some of the woeful speculations of the past year; that America being the natural "refuge for the destitute," he might have been driven thither by his necessities, and was now compelled to menial labour before the mast of a merchant ship; and if so, what a gratifying task it would be to him to protect and shelter the sufferer, for whom the sorrows he had already experienced in his own case and that of his parent had excited a lively interest. Maxwell had naturally warm feelings, and a susceptible heart; and the inherent qualities of his nature being at this particular juncture called into greater activity by the genial operation of Captain Amos Franklin's punch, his mind was in an instant filled with a thousand bright visions. The hope of doing good, the delights of rescuing a countryman from toil and suffering, perhaps from death

itself, all fired his imagination, and in the heyday of feeling he started up, and proposed a visit to the sick man's berth.

"Berth," as a fine lady of my acquaintance once said, when she was shown her accommodation in a steam-packet, "do they call this my *birth?* I rather think it will be my *death.*"

Something of a similar nature was the space in which the unfortunate object of Maxwell's enquiry and benevolence was deposited; however, nothing daunted by the darkness, lowness, heat, and all the other attendants of the dismal hole in which he was located, he proceeded towards the spot, following the surgeon; but his career was suddenly stopped by a signal from that officer, indicating that the poor fellow was asleep; and as all parties agreed, rest was one of the most desirable objects to attain, they also agreed that to disturb him would be foolish, if not hazardous. The enterprise for the moment failed, and the expedition returned to the captain's cabin "*re infectâ,*" but the impression made upon Edward's mind and feelings was not likely to be obliterated by the trifling delay which this circumstance occasioned. Indeed, having visited the part of the vessel in which the sufferer lay, he was well convinced of the absolute necessity of doing something immediately, if any thing were to be done, to relieve a person labouring under such symptoms as those which Slaughter described.

As for Amos Franklin, no man could more loudly applaud the benevolence and philanthropy of Maxwell than he: not only did he anticipate the man's speedy recovery on shore—not only did he foresee the satisfaction which his excellent friend, (if he would allow him to call him so,) would receive from the restoration of his *protégé*, but above all—which he did *not* express—he himself "should get rid of a sick man not worth his salt, and of no use at all whatsoever."

It was late when Maxwell went ashore, full of the chivalrous delight of rescuing an Englishman from misery and death; the thing occurred too at such a happy moment, when his feelings and affections were all ready for use—devoted to one object only, and that a picture. His

mind wanted active occupation, even beyond tasting wine, and branding barrels; his benevolence was, as it were, pent up, and here was an opportunity of doing good, brought to him by what he could not help considering a lucky chance.

He had, however, put things *en train*. He had given directions to Captain Franklin to mention, or cause to be mentioned, to the invalid, the anxiety he had expressed about him, and to say that he should be on board the following morning, and wished to hear such an account of him as he might be inclined to give to a countryman of his own, and that he was also anxious to be of whatever use to him he could, and to offer him any assistance or accommodation in his power; a commission which, as I have already said, Captain Amos Franklin was, for reasons particularly concerning himself and his own interests, quite sure of executing to its very letter.

Franklin had scarcely finished his second cigar "arter breakfast," before, summoning Slaughter to council, he began his enquiries about the sick man Harris. Slaughter considered him a shade better; he quite agreed, as a tractable subordinate should, with Franklin, that going ashore was the only thing that could be relied upon for a chance of restoring him; and having therefore conceded most cordially upon the measure of his removal, it became only necessary to apprise him of the fact, and announce to him the great interest the mere mention of his case had excited in Mr. Edward Maxwell.

At this period Harris had been, as was the case every day, brought up on deck and laid on a grating, covered with an old striped and starred ensign to catch the breeze as it blew over the lovely bay of Funchal, and the captain and the surgeon took the opportunity of speaking to him on the subject so near all their hearts.

"Well, Harris," said Franklin, "how do you find yourself to-day?"

"Weaker, I think, by twenty per cent. than yesterday," said Harris; "I am pretty near the wind-up, captain—my settling day is at hand."

"You must go ashore," said Slaughter.

" To be buried, I suppose," said the invalid.

" No, to recover," replied the doctor ; " I am convinced that a month or six weeks in this island would bring you round."

" How long do we stay here, sir ?" said Harris.

" We !" said Franklin, " why, if you mean the ship, about eight days, I calkilate ; but if you can get well by staying behind, don't you unsettle your mind about that — I 'll let you off."

" Stay here !" said Harris, " how can I stay here ?"

" Why," said Slaughter, " a gentleman who was on board yesterday is interested in your case, and will take care of you during your recovery, and provide for your wants."

" Who is he," said Harris, " that he should be so good to a stranger ?"

" An Englishman," said Franklin, " who feels for a countryman in distress."

" Distress, captain ?" said Harris, " I am in no distress. I can work when I am well—I am distressed because I am ill ; but I'm in no distress."

" I mean," said Franklin, anxious to soothe his anxiety upon the point of his great utility when in health, " the distress of sickness. He is coming on board this afternoon, and will speak to you himself ; and is willing to furnish you accommodation on shore."

" Who is the gentleman, sir ?" said Harris.

" Our wine-merchant," said Franklin.

" What, Maxwell ?" said Harris.

" The same," replied the captain.

" Ah !"— said Harris, and a long pause ensued before he spoke.

" Do you know Mr. Maxwell ?" said Slaughter.

" I, sir !" said the man ; " not I. How should I know Mr. Maxwell ? — I never was here before."

" But you seemed startled yesterday," said Slaughter, " when you saw the name branded on the casks."

" Did I ?" said Harris. " It was not *that* that startled me then. No ; I'm much obliged to the gentleman for his offer ; but though I'm poor, I'm proud. I can't ac-

cept his kindness — I'd rather not see him. If I *am* to go ashore, I'd rather go before he comes. They tell me there's a hospital ashore, doctor, — I can go there — but why not let me die where I am?"

"Your good friend, Mr. Maxwell, will not suffer that," said Franklin. "Have you been long from England, Harris?"

"Some time, sir, — some time," said Harris; "but what of that, captain? Something must be done for me, captain. If I shall die by staying on board, put me ashore — send me to the hospital — I ——"

The sudden change of all his views and wishes — the rapid transition from the desire to be left to die quietly on board — and the anxious request to be sent on shore immediately, struck Slaughter as indications of derangement of intellect; and drawing the captain back from the position in which he stood near the patient, he considered it right, in the present stage of the case, to assent, or seem to assent, to his proposition.

"If," said he, "you really prefer going to a hospital, to being taken under the care of a benevolent gentleman ——"

"I do, sir," said Harris, raising himself on the deck; "I do indeed, sir. Why should I lay myself under obligations to a gentleman who can care nothing about me, sir? Why — why should I trouble any body — why disturb a family?"

"He has no family here," said Franklin; "he is living alone. His father and sister, and his partner and wife, are all gone to England."

"Alone is he?" said Harris. "His father gone to England, and his daughter? What then, is this gentleman — eh? — alone — no, no, — but why — I — let me go ashore, sir — let me go to this place of refuge — let me release you of all trouble — I can't live long — I ——"

"My advice is," said Slaughter, taking the captain aside, "that he should be sent ashore as soon as possible. Delirium is again coming on. Mr. Maxwell would have a sad job of it: at the hospital there are proper accom-

modations and genteel attendance, and — that's my advice, captain."

"Partiklur reasonable, I calkilate," said Franklin. "Harris," continued he, addressing the invalid, "the doctor and I agree that if you really prefer the hospital——"

"I do, I do — indeed I do!" said Harris, energetically; "any thing to incurring obligations. Let me go directly — this moment — I am quite strong enough. See, sir — see, I can go."

Here the wretched man, by a violent effort, raised himself on his feet, but in an instant fell to the deck, and remained senseless from the violence of the shock.

For a moment the bystanders thought it was all over, and that life had fled; but he again "gradially," as the doctor said, recovered; and when he was sufficiently restored to repeat his expressions of anxiety to go to the hospital, the captain ordered a boat to be manned, and poor Harris and his kit, consisting of a well filled sea-chest, and a sort of leathern haversack which had evidently seen better days, were conveyed from the Jonadab Brown, under the care and superintendence of Dr. Slaughter, who humanely accompanied the invalid ashore, and who was commissioned by Captain Franklin, after he had procured admission for his patient at the hospital, to proceed to Maxwell's house and report progress, in order that, if Maxwell should have no other object in visiting the ship than tendering his services to the poor man, he might be spared the trouble of an excursion in the heat of the day.

Scarcely had the boat got midway between the ship and the shore, than one of the sailors came aft to Captain Franklin, holding in his hand a small but weighty object.

"What's that?" said the captain.

"Why," said the sailor, "in rowsting out Harris's hammock and things, just for to ventilate the place, we found this, sir. As right's right, it belongs to him, sir; and so, if you please just to count it out, as he sha'n't say hereafter we have taken any on it, we shall we glad if you will send it ashore after him."

Franklin desired the man to follow him to the cabin, and taking from him a shortish leathern bag or pouch,

which it seemed Harris had been in the habit of wearing constantly about his person, but which, in the hurry and agitation of the moment of departure, he had left behind him, he proceeded to shake out its contents on the table; and, in the presence of the sailor, counted thirty-seven English sovereigns, nine half sovereigns, four American gold dollars, a Portuguese doubloon, and nineteen Spanish dollars in silver; which sum total, agreeing with what the sailor had previously "jotted down" on a piece of paper, the captain, according to the desire of his honest crew, took charge of, and determined upon giving to Maxwell, who had expressed so kind a desire of being serviceable to the man; and in whose care the money would be more secure, and rendered more useful to the invalid, than if entrusted either to himself in his precarious state of health, or to the attendants of the establishment in which he was placed.

Franklin, however, did not dismiss the sailor without expressing his satisfaction at his conduct, and that of his messmates, whose principles were not to be affected by their love of gain, or their dislike of an Englishman.

The captain, shortly after this proceeding, went ashore, and took his luncheon at Maxwell's, where he related the circumstances of the case, and delivered the modicum of treasure into his custody. They were here joined by the doctor, who had secured an asylum for the poor sailor (and as Franklin, who loved a joke in his way, said, "a *poor* sailor indeed he was"), which much rejoiced the said Franklin, because it had cleared the ship of an invalid, whom he had no doubt would very shortly become very troublesome, rather than from any hope of his eventual recovery. It appeared, from what he could collect, that the germ of the man's present complaint had been a violent attack of yellow fever; and that some mental excitement to which, as Slaughter and the Portuguese doctor at the hospital agreed, he must have been previously subject, had so completely undermined and broken down his constitution, that there was no hope, even with the greatest care and attention, of restoring him.

"Well," said Maxwell, "as I have taken up the cause

of this poor fellow, although I am rejected, I shall not be repulsed entirely. It will be my charge to see that he is taken care of where he is; and, by being constituted trustee of his property, I can avail myself of my official privilege to visit him."

"He will not be long here to burthen your kindness, I guess," said Slaughter. "He never seemed to me so much excited as when I left him; but I ought to do him the justice to say, that in his anxiety to learn all particulars concerning his benefactor, he showed any thing rather than want of gratitude for his kind intentions."

Maxwell had, during his residence in Madeira, and especially since his appearance in the responsible character which he now maintained there, so conciliated all parties, and so thoroughly ingratiated himself with every class of the inhabitants, that his influence was commanding; and he was sufficiently aware of that fact to know, that however well and liberally conducted the medical establishment at the Portuguese hospital might be, his appearing to take a personal interest in the case of any particular patient, would, without saying it to the prejudice of the general care and attention bestowed upon the inmates of the building, ensure every comfort and consideration that circumstances would permit of. This, of itself, would have been sufficient to induce him forthwith to visit his unknown countryman, but the fact that he was actually in possession of property adequate to the purchase of any little luxuries the poor sufferer might require, tended to compel his putting his intentions into almost immediate execution; and, accordingly, when his nautical friends had taken their departure, he proceeded, laden with Harris's treasure, to the infirmary.

Arrived there, he began his enquiries of the medical man in office, from whom he learned that the sailor about whom he was interested had missed the bag in question, but that his mind seemed so entirely preoccupied, that the care or even recollection of the subject appeared to have been entirely obliterated. He had put many questions to the officers of the establishment as to the character of the English gentleman who had offered so generously to assist

him; and appeared very much affected by every thing which they mentioned relating to him — that he was frequently attacked by delirium, but that a flood of tears, which the silent recurrence to some one subject invariably produced, as constantly relieved him; and that although his interest was only for a moment excited about the loss of his money, the haversack which he brought with him appeared to be an object of the most intense interest. He was at that moment, the officer said, sleeping, or perhaps only resting, with it under his head; he had never attempted to open it during the few hours he had been there, and it appeared to them sealed as well as locked; but that of course, it being no affair of theirs, they had no further noticed the case, than as it appeared of such vital importance to the poor fellow, whose manners and quiet submission to whatever was proposed to him had quite gained the affections of the subordinates connected with the establishment.

"Do you think he would see me?" said Maxwell.

"I should advise your not pressing an interview upon him," said the attendant.

"But supposing," said Maxwell, "supposing that, as he has expressed so strong a disinclination to subject himself to obligation, and such a dislike to seeing the individual who was anxious to do him a service, you were to tell him that a person charged with the bag and money which he left on board is commissioned by Captain Franklin to deliver it into his own hands?"

"In that way," said the attendant, "I consider that there will be no difficulty; but if the plan succeeds — and I am sure, sir, after the kindness and sympathy you have been good enough to exhibit towards the poor fellow, any wish of yours it is our duty to comply with, — if the plan succeeds, and you should see him, do not, in the course of any conversation you may have with him, let it escape you that you *are* the person to whom, even as it is, he feels himself under such obligation — it is a turn of his disorder — it is a chord in the system which vibrates powerfully when touched; and whenever your name has been mentioned since he has been here, and since he has been aware of your

good intentions, his agitation is terrible. As I have already said, tears give him relief; but, perhaps, if the excitement were increased by your actual presence, the consequences might be fatal."

"God forbid," said Maxwell, "that any idle curiosity of mine should endanger a fellow-creature's life! Go you to him, and deliver the message I suggest—that I am a person deputed by the captain to hand him the purse; and if he admits me, which of course he will, I pledge myself to say nothing which can lead him to connect me in *that* character with myself in my own."

"Wait while I go," said the attendant, "and state the circumstance. He has a room entirely to himself; and having administered some sedatives, he may be asleep. If so, I shall not disturb him; but I will be back in five minutes."

"Poor fellow!" thought Maxwell, "who knows but that this man, the menial of a merchant ship, the derided landsman of a motley crew, exposed to toil, to dangers, and to difficulties, may, like myself, have been nursed in the lap of comfort and luxury? What should I—I myself—have been, if a fostering hand in this very island had not been extended to my relief?—for all I know, the very same as he. Providence, all gracious Providence, has protected me, raised me up friends in strange lands, and made me a prop to the declining age and fortunes of my father. Is it not my duty, as well as my happiness, to do to others that which hath been done to me? and how can I better show my gratitude for the blessings that have been vouchsafed to me, than by sharing them with an object like this poor outcast? He may be base—he may be criminal; but how dare I judge my fellow-creatures, weak and fallible as I am myself? By this man will I do my duty; he is a stranger, and in a foreign land—if he has erred and fallen, may God forgive him!"

Who is there who has experienced the gladdening, soothing thrill of satisfaction which follows the commission of a good deed, small as may be its extent, and trifling as may be its effect, who will not enter into the blessed feeling which animated Edward Maxwell at this moment, and

appreciate the intensity of benevolence which filled his generous heart?

"You must not disturb him now, sir," said the attendant, returning to the room where Maxwell was waiting—"he is in a sound sleep. I have pursued the system the surgeon of the ship adopted, and, if not eventually successful, I am sure it is the best to be adopted."

"Might I see him?" said Maxwell; "for I have excited in myself an interest about him which I can hardly define."

"To be sure," said the attendant; "tread lightly—a sudden waking from sleep procured as his has been, might be dangerous—this way, sir."

The attendant preceded Edward, cautiously and silently—the young merchant followed step by step—they ascended the staircase, and passed through several spacious rooms—at length they reached that in which the poor fellow lay.

He was still fast asleep—his head turned towards the wall, and partly covered with the bed-clothes, so that Maxwell might as well have remained where he was, if he expected to derive any new interest in the sufferer, by becoming personally acquainted with him. The attendant calculating professionally upon the restlessness of his patient, and knowing that his face was turned precisely in the opposite direction when he left him before, motioned to Maxwell to stand where he was. They waited and watched—two, three, four minutes elapsed, and all was still; so still, that Edward could hear his own heart throb—another minute—the attendant lifted his finger, to announce that his patient was moving.

"Poor Kate!" said the sufferer, "God help thee!"

"Hush!" said the attendant.

The sufferer turned on his side, and exhibited his pale emaciated countenance to Maxwell.

It was Apperton!

CHAPTER X.

The parent's partial fondness for a child,
An only child, can surely be no crime.
'T were breaking all the tender strings of nature,
Which tune our souls to harmony and love —
'T were bidding us to act against ourselves,
To disregard our children's safety here;
No — care 's a father's right — a pleasing right —
In which he labours with a homefelt joy. SHIRLEY.

It will be recollected that we left Charles Somerford in all the confusion of modest gratitude to Lord Lessingham, for his lordship's splendid offers of friendship and protection; having, however, as he could scarcely avoid, accepted them: any scruples which the delicacy of a man of no family and small fortune might interpose between the intentions of a man of high rank and great wealth, and which Charles Somerford was as likely as any man living to bring forward, were softened down by the promise of the old lord, that the day would come when he would have no scruple at all in availing himself of his proposed munificence; by which the major concluded that the noble earl meant to convince him, that if he did not choose to consent to his own aggrandisement, he, the said noble earl, would forthwith make a will, by which he should bequeath the entire wealth which he had offered him, for the foundation of an hospital, or the endowment of a school — objects, beyond question, meritorious in themselves, but to the which it would require more than mortal philosophy to devote a fortune, the possession of which would not only ensure his own happiness but the happiness of those whom he loved better than himself.

Charles Somerford was compelled to quit Lord Lessingham's beautiful villa in the neighbourhood of London, for a day or two, in order to make the necessary arrangements for taking up his abode with him altogether; but his lordship, when he quitted him, earnestly entreated him to make his absence as short as possible, and so to settle his affairs that frequent visits to the metropolis were not to be considered essential. Charles bowed to a wish, to the gra-

tification of which Lord Lessingham was certainly entitled. The whole object of his life seemed to be, a constant association with the individual who had been beloved by his Emily; and it was little less the duty, on the part of Somerford, who had accepted one part of the treaty, to do all he could to fulfil the other.

Nothing could better suit poor Charles than the quiet of the noble earl's retreat. The neighbours vying in anxiety to show their respect and attention to the venerable peer, were kept at bay, as it were, by his lordship's young friend; he received their visits, he returned them; and when he could — as he did in the course of a short time — persuade his lordship to admit a few chosen friends in an evening, Charles had the arrangement and management of every thing.

But it was impossible not to observe, although occasionally the scene was enlivened by a transient gleam of sunshine, that Lord Lessingham was gradually sinking, and that too, faster, as time wore on; till at last, after a night of great restlessness and agitation, Charles was summoned earlier than usual to the breakfast-room, where the earl had already arrived; but it seemed to Charles that something very decisive in its effect upon his lordship's constitution had taken place since they parted the preceding evening. Something like paralysis, of which Lord Lessingham himself was evidently unconscious, had affected him, and Charles could scarcely conceal the effect which the sudden, and, as it seemed to him, awful alteration of the old lord's appearance made upon him on his first entrance to the apartment. There was an expression in Lord Lessingham's countenance, that Somerford could not separate in his mind from a warning of death; and although his lordship repeatedly assured him that he did not feel himself worse, his anxious young friend was unable to dispel the serious apprehensions he entertained from the first moment he saw him in the morning.

Without apprising his lordship of his intention, he despatched a servant with a note, requesting a visit from the physician who always attended the family, intimating, at the same time, a wish that he should make it appear as

if his calling were accidental, lest Lord Lessingham should be needlessly alarmed by his requiring advice at a moment when, according to his own feelings, it was not necessary.

It was afternoon before the physician arrived. Lord Lessingham received him as usual; but in a moment was convinced that Charles had been prompted by his apprehension of danger to send for him.

"I know," said his lordship, "that Somerford has caused you to be sent for, doctor: he thinks me dangerously ill—but I am not so."

"I hope not, my lord," said the physician; "but, with me, the precautionary system is a favourite one. I should recommend quiet and repose."

"Do you think me worse?" said Lord Lessingham.

"Not worse, my lord," replied the doctor; "but still, so delicate, that a change might occur, before we were aware of it, without proper care."

"I have much to say," said Lord Lessingham; "much to tell, and much to explain to Somerford—if I——"

"It would be advisable to do it then," said the doctor; "for——"

"Is it so far gone as that?" said Lord Lessingham.

"Not so, indeed, Lord Lessingham," said the physician; "but I am quite sure, the sooner your mind is relieved from business of importance, the more comfortable your bodily health will be; and I should suggest the getting over any conversation likely to interest or agitate you, as speedily as possible."

"I see—I see it all," said the invalid; "another day, and perhaps I may be unable to explain myself—it shall be so. Leave me then, and come to us this evening."

"I will be here," said the physician: "in the mean time, let your mind be as little acted upon as possible."

"Ah!" said Lord Lessingham, "that caution is useless—it must be acted upon, and powerfully too; but I must trust to Providence to support me through the trial. At nine, then, I shall see you."

"Please God!" said the physician, in a tone which implied that *he* would certainly be punctual, but that Lord Lessingham might not be conscious of his presence.

Somerford followed the physician from the room, and found his opinion generally coincided with his own as to Lord Lessingham's health: there was no immediate danger, but he was gradually sinking, and the change which had actually taken place within the last four-and-twenty hours and which had excited Charles's alarm, had been certainly more rapid than the usual course. The return of the doctor at nine, Somerford looked forward to with anxiety; and he resolved, if his excellent friend and patient should have lost ground considerably at that time, not to suffer the physician to quit the house during the night.

When Charles returned to Lord Lessingham's room, he found him weeping bitterly. Charles endeavoured to soothe and cheer him, but his efforts were vain; and Somerford thought the wisest thing to do, was to suffer his grief, which he of course attributed to the recollection of poor Lady Emily, which was so indelibly recorded in his mind, to have its way. He sat himself by the side of the couch on which Lord Lessingham was extended, and waited watchfully his return to composure.

"Charles," said his lordship, "that I am dying I begin to feel: the words of the physician have opened the whole truth to me more clearly than my personal feelings; and while I have strength, I must unburthen myself of that which has lain a heavy load upon my heart for years. What I am about to say is elsewhere recorded; and recorded in such a form, as to render the effects which the disclosure must produce certain and incontestable.—I should wish, after I have relieved my mind of the detail, which you must hear, to have with me our worthy rector. I long to join with him in prayer; but I cannot do so with satisfaction to myself, until you have heard the history of my early life, which I am about to impart to you."

"Spare me, my lord," said Charles; "spare yourself the recital of events which may agitate and unsettle your mind."

"Spare!" said Lord Lessingham; "no, Charles, no, I will not spare myself, who spared not others. Listen: As you know, Charles, I was born in the year 1759,—born with all the advantages of rank and fortune, and grew, after

the usual course of modern education, to be what is called a man of fashion and a man of the world, before I had reached the years of discretion. At that period, in the heyday of youth, and in the tumult of passions by which youth is assailed, my station, my accomplishments, and, as I then was told, my personal merits, obtained me an easy access to all societies, and a greater share of favour than perhaps I deserved. My father proposed a marriage to me, which, like most others entered into under similar circumstances, was one of convenience. I refused to obey his wishes. I was fondly attached——"

Here his lordship seemed overcome by the recollection of past circumstances, and Charles entreated him to take some sort of refreshment before he proceeded. He did so, and shortly resumed his narration.

"I was," continued his lordship, "devotedly attached to a being all innocence and goodness. I loved her with the ardency of youth, and the warmth of a first affection: a marriage with *her* would have been destruction to my worldly views and prospects, and, at the moment when my father was urging another connection, must have separated us for ever. No arts were untried on my part, no solicitations unused, to induce this amiable, excellent girl to consent to be mine without the sanction of the church. I own it, Charles—I confess, I admit my errors—it is that confession, it is those admissions, from which I expect relief. She withstood the specious flattery of her superior; she resisted the glittering offers of wealth and splendour which I basely made her—she triumphed,—and I, devoted to her for her beauty and her merit, became the worshipper of her virtue and excellence—I married her."

Lord Lessingham again appeared exhausted, but the pause of a few moments recovered him.

"A few months of stolen bliss," continued his lordship, "for my father never knew of the marriage, were all that was granted me in return for my filial disobedience. She died soon after having given birth to a daughter, and I, reckless of consequences, and driven to desperation by the early blight which had fallen upon my joy and happiness, declared my readiness to obey my father's wishes with respect to my marriage, and in less than six months was united to

the lady he had selected for me. The happiness such a match was likely to produce must be, as you can conceive, most problematical; and after bearing me a daughter, my fellow-victim to a marriage of expediency, fled from me to the arms of a nobleman now, like herself, gone to his long account, leaving me an only daughter.

"That daughter," said Lord Lessingham, "grew up the pride of my heart, the idol of my affections, mild, amiable, accomplished, and beautiful; she possessed every quality that could adorn her sex. Animated with intelligence, and an ever-varying expression, her countenance was the index of a mind pure and unsophisticated, as it was vigorous and active; in her manners, there was about her a winning sweetness, a grace which courts improve, but cannot give, and an unstudied genuineness of participation in all the hopes and fears of others, joined to an artless energy and warm enthusiasm for those she loved. I speak of a darling daughter, Charles, perhaps too favourably; but she was a superior being,—she walked amidst the vices and the follies of the world unsullied, uncontaminated; and while the artless smile of pleasure played upon her cheek, and the bright fire of intellect sparkled in her eyes, there was ever beaming round her the pure radiancy of virtue to sanctify her beauty.

"On my elevation to the earldom of Lessingham," said his lordship, "I obtained the barony to be in remainder to her and her issue generally; and she married (with all my hopes of happiness for her, as I thought, realised,) the Earl of Carisbrook, a man distinguished in his military career, and universally esteemed by all who knew him in private. But Charles, Charles, the follies of my early days!—sins—call them sins—have been visited upon me in later life. My noble son-in-law fell on the field of battle—a nobler spirit never winged its flight to heaven than his; but my poor Emily never recovered the shock, and although she lingered on, and, as you know, has been lost to me but three short years, the sword that pierced her husband's heart broke hers."

"Calm yourself, my dear lord," said Charles, "pray pause—these recollections are too much for you."

"No," said his lordship; "I am performing a sacred duty, let it tear me, rack me as it will. I shall be easier when I have done my duty. With her dying breath, she bequeathed me our poor, dear, lost child. Oh, Somerford! Somerford! death has been busy in my house! The chastening hand of Providence has been over me; but I bow—my poor—fond—darling Emily!"

Lord Lessingham was here so exhausted that he fell back on the couch, and for a moment Somerford dreaded the worst, and that all was over: he chafed his temples, and rubbed his hands, and at length again the old man resumed.

"Emily," said his Lordship, and the very name brought fresh tears into his eyes,—"Emily was the only child of what I had hoped to see a happy, prosperous marriage; to her, on my death, as my heir, would have devolved all my estates and fortune, and the barony which would have been her mother's had she survived me. Lord Carisbrook's title descended to a younger brother, whom you have seen, I think, at Cheltenham; and now, at nearly seventy years of age, am I left alone in the wide world to sink into my grave unregarded and unlamented."

"Oh! do not say so, Lord Lessingham," said Charles, "while a being devoted to you is at your side, whose affec——"

"Affection!" cried Lord Lessingham: "affection to me! no, no! you have not heard the whole of this strange tale; much remains to be divulged, much to be told, which must make you hate me. I told you, Charles, I married the woman of my heart, the being I idolised; but what was the sequel? Pride, hateful pride, and the fear of a father, prouder than myself, induced me carefully to conceal from all the world the fact of the marriage I had contracted. Emma, the beloved of my heart, in pure affection, she, whom of all God's creatures I loved the most, died in obscurity, and I, to stifle all remarks, to obviate all enquiry, sent forth into the world, as an orphan, the poor infant child to whom she had given birth, and fastened on its name the stamp of illegitimacy."

"Pray, pray, calm yourself," said Charles.

"I am calm — calm as I can be," said his lordship: "listen, listen to me: that infant — that daughter, deserted by her father, cast off, abandoned, and thrown upon the world, was educated by a hired menial as his child, passed in the world for his offspring, and as his daughter, married ——"

"There ——" interrupted Charles.

"Hear me, Charles," said Lord Lessingham: "in that station, with such a portion as her reputed father could be supposed to give her, she married, became the affectionate wife of a professional man, honourable and talented; but whom, since his death, I hear was poor. It was through this connection of hers I knew the Maxwells, with whom you would have allied yourself."

"Indeed, my lord," said Charles.

"Yes, yes," said Lord Lessingham: "the man who married my daughter, the daughter I disowned, and to the last neglected, was a friend of Maxwell in his youth; but as he sank in the world through neglect and illness, Maxwell advised him to retire to the neighbourhood of London, where he might obtain, if a confined, at least a respectable practice. In that place he died — the husband of my daughter, Charles, died — died in poverty! Are these not crimes to shudder at? Are these ——"

"Pray, sir, do not needlessly agitate yourself," said Charles.

"He left a son," continued Lord Lessingham, "of whom I had heard favourable accounts, and who survived his mother, who died unnoticed by her unnatural, cruel parent — that son was the *protégé* of Maxwell."

"Of Maxwell!" said Charles.

"Of Maxwell!" rejoined his Lordship: "he went abroad, fought, bled in his country's service; and I watched his actions; my eye was ever on him. Pride, pride, hated pride, Charles, induced me to smother every right feeling and repress even parental affection. My beloved grand-daughter Emily was the inheritor of my title, of my fortune: acknowledging this boy with all his merits, and all his rights, would have deprived *her* of her honours and station. I did him this continued injustice — I kept my shameful secret."

"But now," said Somerford, "now that all you cared for is gone, restore him to those rights. Where is he now?"

"BEFORE ME, CHARLES!" exclaimed his Lordship:—"you, you, my much-injured Charles! You are the grandson I deserted—you are the rightful heir, whose claims I endeavoured to supersede."

It is impossible to say which of the two actors in this scene was the more overcome at this crisis. In a moment all the past kindness and affectionate treatment of Lord Lessingham was accounted for; in a moment Charles was at the feet of his aged grandfather, the acknowledged successor of his honours and his fortune.

"I have but one excuse to make," said Lord Lessingham, raising himself on the couch, "but one palliative to bring forward in extenuation of my unnatural conduct. The follies of youth, the folly of pride had estranged me from your mother during my father's lifetime. It would have been worse than madness on my part to have attempted to bring either her or you forward, or even to name you: thus what my own thoughtlessness had entailed upon your unoffending mother, my subsequent apprehensions entailed on you; and when the dear child, who is now gone—taken from me in judgment for my base attempts, Charles,—grew into my love, into my very heart of hearts, I had not courage to do you an act of justice, which would at once deprive her of the advantages for the attainment of which all my influence had been exerted."

"For Heaven's sake, sir," said Charles, "think not for one moment on what is passed. Our dear Lady Emily's virtues and qualities are of themselves sufficient reasons to me for maintaining her claim against that of an unknown orphan."

"Generous Charles!" said his lordship, "let me conclude. When I heard, which I did, of the death of your poor mother's supposed parents, I hastened to the spot, with the intention of declaring her origin, and avowing her legitimacy; but I saw your father: he convinced me, by his manner, that he was wholly ignorant of every circum-

stance which could lead to a discovery, if I did not make it; and then being under awe of a parent, whose pride had been my greatest bane, I gladly availed myself of his want of knowledge, and left him uninformed of my name or my intentions. I was not unmindful of him in after-days; and justice to myself compels me to tell you, that he received, during the latter part of his life, from an unknown source, a competency, which I dared not exceed, lest a large source of income should excite suspicion as to the power of the donor, and thus lead to a discovery I wished to avoid; but never, never can I think of the fate of my daughter, who was abandoned by me. Oh, Charles! see —see in me an example that neither rank nor wealth can save the sinner from the pangs of remorse, the stings of conscience."

"Useless now, sir, are these regrets," said Somerford: "her son——"

"Ay, Charles," interrupted his lordship, "let me explain my conduct to you while I am able. I watched your progress at Maxwell's—I traced your departure—I even attributed it to the right cause: yet I did not regret it. You were provided for, and provided for, away from me and mine: you returned, and by chance was thrown near me—to that chance we are indebted for this explanation. The death of my poor daughter, Lady Emily, the fate of her husband, and the deviation of his title from the right line in consequence, narrowed my connections and reduced my former importance; and when my poor Emily sickened, and I saw increasing illness gain upon her, I——"

"Spare yourself the recital, my lord," said Charles; "I——"

"Suffice it then to say," sobbed the old man, "that I knew of your illness at the Cape; that I traced you homeward; and that I engaged a friend of mine, without of course divulging the smallest circumstance likely to lead him towards the truth, to observe the movements of the Maxwell family, whom I understood to be at Brighton at the period of your return. Your landing there was unexpected, and of course I knew nothing of it; for Lord Bryanston, whose services I put in requisition, was not

aware of the connection between you and the surgeon's family. I soon found, from other sources, that you had been successful in your career in India; and when the offer of your acquaintance was made me by Macleod, I grasped at it with rapture — the smouldering affections of nature burst into a flame, and I received the child of my deserted daughter with delight.

"Then it was, Charles, that beholding in you all that I considered desirable in a husband for my poor Emily, I encouraged the hope that you might be united. Then should I have done you the justice I had so long withheld, and have acknowledged you as the son of my first daughter, in whose right, according to the remainder in the patent, you succeed to my barony; because you would have conferred the rank upon your cousin, and thus have blended all the objects I had in view in one. But that, however, was not to be; but I have done you justice now, and now my mind is at ease."

"Let me implore your blessing, sir," said Charles: "forgive me the pain my conduct must have caused you; forgive the injustice I may have done you, in not understanding the full extent of your kindness."

"Kindness, Charles," said Lord Lessingham: "my kindness has been but small — the justice I have done, compulsory; for had my poor Emily survived, you would have lived and died unconscious of our relationship. But," added his lordship, again relapsing into tears, "the ways of Providence are inscrutable, and you are righted."

His lordship, at this period, was so much exhausted, that Charles forbade him, as he valued his happiness, to continue to speak; and remained at his side watching him, as he slumbered, from the effects of the exertion of mind and body which he had made.

What were Charles's feelings, as he contemplated the picture before him — the recollections which flashed across him, when he recalled the treatment of Maxwell; his having exiled him from England to avoid an union with his daughter; — Maxwell, too, whose vanity would have been excited, whose pride gratified in the highest degree, by the prospect of such a connection: but such is ever the success

of the most calculating manœuvrers, who sacrifice the best affections of those they profess to love to the petty lucre of gain, or the paltry aggrandisement which adventitious rank may bestow.

Lord Lessingham slumbered on until the arrival of the medical attendant, whose visit he expected. The doctor pronounced his noble patient weakened only by the fatigue of conversation, and recommended quiet and repose as most likely to produce temporary relief; for, without knowing how very much the rank and fortune of Somerford would be changed by the death of his lordship, and therefore without any view of flattering his expectations as a worldly doctor might think it amiable to do, the said doctor gave Charles distinctly to understand, that the decay which no art could check had begun, and that the greatest point to be attained, in the present state of his lordship's constitution, was to smooth the path to eternity by the regular process of abstaining from any topic which could agitate or irritate the patient.

Lord Lessingham, as if perfectly aware of the value of time, had made arrangements for seeing his solicitor, and other persons connected with his worldly affairs, the next day; and accordingly, in the presence of several witnesses, he signed and acknowledged the written statement of all that he had told his avowed grandson Charles; appended to which, were the certificate of his marriage with Miss Emma Gaysford, the extract from the register of the baptism of their legitimate daughter, that of the baptism of Charles Somerford, together with the certificate of the marriage of Somerford and his mother; in short, every document necessary to make the facts of the case clear and unquestionable had been collected, and would have been previously brought into use, had the projected marriage between Charles and his cousin Lady Emily been brought about.

The marriage of Lord Lessingham with Miss Gaysford took place in June, 1780; she died in March, 1781, leaving the new-born infant, Sophia, afterwards mother to Charles. In the year, 1798, being between seventeen and eighteen years of age, Sophia married Somerford under

circumstances which have already been recapitulated; and Charles was born in the year 1799. Mrs. Woodley, the supposed mother of Mrs. Somerford, died in 1805; the Somerfords settled in London in 1806; and Somerford died in 1815. Charles, then under the protection of Maxwell, left England for India in 1817, at the age of eighteen, and returned to Great Britain in 1825, after an absence of eight years, his mother having died in the year 1822.

All these dates having been duly collected, and the necessary papers arranged, Lord Lessingham, with perfect composure and self-possession, completed his worldly duties by delivering his will to his solicitors; and on their departure resigned himself to the care of his spiritual adviser, and the constant attention of his newly acknowledged grandson, with a mind unburthened of a heavy load, and a heart full of sincere repentance and pious faith.

While all these matters were, as the Americans say, progressing, much more was doing in other parts of the world; and Hanningham, whose efforts in ascertaining the real amount of Maxwell's liabilities continued unsuccessful, became more and more agitated as the days passed between his first interview with Hall, and that upon which the recorder's report was to be received by the king. It so happened, that a continued illness of our beloved monarch delayed the reception of this awful catalogue of crime, even beyond Hanningham's hopes; for his object was, whatever the cause of his anxiety might be, to protract the period of Hall's existence until some other event occurred; but what that event was, not even his better half had yet ascertained: seeing that, as I have already said, he deprived himself of sharing with her the greatest satisfaction he had ever received from a piece of unexpected intelligence, lest she should, in her eagerness to delight others, divulge the good news before the proper season had arrived for doing so, and before Hall had legally and authoritatively made his statement, which was to exonerate the memory of old Mr. Hanningham from obloquy and disgrace. However, it could not be expected that the man should volun-

tarily confess the commission of a capital offence, with which there was now no chance of his being charged, while there yet remained the slightest hope of his obtaining a commutation of one of which he actually stood convicted.

There was one person, with whom the reader is as yet but little acquainted, whose heart would be gladdened by the intelligence which Hall's confession would convey, and that was the sister of Hanningham, of whom the culprit spoke in Newgate. This young lady, beautiful and accomplished, and eligible to a place in the best society, was, by the fatal blow on her family, driven from the world: circumstances prevented her accepting an asylum in her brother's house at Madeira, and her natural feelings and affections prompted her to utter seclusion. Hanningham looked forward, therefore, with increased satisfaction to the establishment of his venerated parent's innocence, inasmuch as he was quite certain that a knowledge of that fact would bring back his affectionate daughter to the world, and restore her to the comforts and pleasures of a family circle. Still so terrified was he lest he should, knowing what he did, fail in establishing the facts, that even *she* was left in ignorance of any part of the disclosure upon which so much depended.

Five weeks had now rolled over Hanningham's head since the interview with Hall, and every hour increased his anxiety, till at length, one morning at breakfast, he saw announced in the newspapers that the dreaded report had been presented, and that Hall, amongst others, was ordered for execution the following Wednesday. His wife, whose mind, when *she* read newspapers, ran upon fashionable arrivals and departures, on births, deaths, marriages, and a detail of parties at which, after burning lamps that never were lighted, inhaling the sweets of flowers that never were planted, describing suppers that never were prepared, the said newspapers proceeded to enumerate a list of illustrious visiters who were neither invited or expected, or, if invited or expected, never came, could not conceive what violent interest her husband could take about the recorder's report. In short, she thought it rather a peculiarity in a

gentleman whose father had made an exhibition upon the scaffold, to hunt out that particular portion of the paper to direct his attention to; and now that he saw the dreadful fact announced, his agitation arrived at such a pitch, that she feared something a little wrong in his brains; he was so dreadfully excited at the very sound of an execution. If the dear, good-hearted man would but have told her the whole truth—and now that Hall's death was decided upon, one would have thought he might, at all events, have done so—she would have been easy, and the house would have gone on comfortably.

It is quite a mistaken idea, that a woman cannot keep a secret—nobody so well. Trust her but with half, or try to keep it from her altogether, and she is sure to beat you; because her pride prompts her to find out what the man thinks it right to conceal, and then her vanity induces her to tell, what she has found out; and this in order to show her power of discovery. Trust all to her, and she will never betray you; but half a confidence is not worth having: so perhaps Hanningham thought; and as he did not feel himself justified in giving his lady the whole of his, gave her none.

Two or three days after this curious scene of agitation, Mr. Hanningham made his appearance in the presence of his lady, looking like the summer's sun, all glowing with smiles, excessively hot, and prodigiously happy.

"Do you think, my love," said he, as he walked about her boudoir dancingly, "do you think we could secure some more bedrooms in this house?"

They had removed from the hotel into furnished lodgings in Albemarle Street.

"I dare say we might, my dear," said she, who sat transfixed to her chair, her eyes following the movements of her husband round the room, as the whip-man at Astley's follows the gentleman in tight whites and spangles, who is attitudinising on the horse.

"Shall I ring for the servant, and enquire?" said Mr. Hanningham.

"To be sure, my love, if you like," said Mrs. Hanningham; "but why do you want more rooms?"

"Because, my dear," said Mr. Hanningham, "I expect more company."

"Company, love?" said Mrs. Hanningham.

"Company, dear," said Mr. Hanningham.

"Where are they coming from?" said Mrs. Hanningham.

"Can't you guess?" said Mr. Hanningham.

"Not I," said the lady.

"That's very odd," said the gentleman.

"Who are they?" asked the lady.

"An old gentleman and his daughter," replied the gentleman.

"Oh, I know now," said Mrs. Hanningham; "Mr. and Miss Maxwell. But do you think it safe for them to come?"

"Perfectly safe," said Hanningham; "you may rely upon it—if it were not safe, do you think I should advise it?"

"No, my love," said Mrs. Hanningham; "only Kate is such a favourite of yours."

"Ring the bell, my sweet Mrs. Hanningham," said the husband; "and don't be jealous."

"Jealous—oh!" said the lady; "I——"

"No, my dear, I know," said Hanningham; "but perhaps you will take the trouble to enquire, yourself—ladies manage all these things so much better than men."

"Any thing to save men the trouble, I believe," said Mrs. Hanningham. "However, I'll be the good, patient wife, and go."

She went; and Hanningham, having performed sundry evolutions in the way of walking and skipping about the apartment until she returned, was then informed that ample accommodation could be afforded for the expected visiters.

"You must remember," said Mrs. Hanningham, "when they come, not, in your careless manner, to call them Maxwell, as Kate writes me word their friend Mr. Moss did."

"My dear, trust to me," said Mr. Hanningham. "If I call them Maxwell I will suffer you to cut my head off."

"When do they come?" said Mrs. Hanningham.

"This evening," said Mr. Hanningham.

"From Portsmouth?" enquired Mrs. Hanningham.

"Exactly so, my dear," replied Mr. Hanningham; "they will expect a late dinner here, so—you understand, my love—I have said."

And here again Mr. Hanningham performed the part of harlequin, ending his rapid circuit round the room by saluting Columbine, in the character of his wife, in a manner the most ardent and sonorous.

"Why, you are mad, my dear Hanningham," said Mrs. Hanningham.

"What, for doing *so?*" said Mr. Hanningham. "But I believe I *am* rather flighty, my love," added he: "so, with your permission, I shall absent myself for an hour or two, having business of importance to transact. Now, remember dinner at half-past seven."

"Does Dawes come with them, my love?" said Mrs. Hanningham.

"D—— Dawes!" said Mr. Hanningham—"who cares for Dawes—what's Dawes to me, or I to Dawes?—never mind Dawes, my beloved—let every body shift for himself—and do be punctual. Good-by, love—adieu till seven—I cannot stay in the house, so I must e'en go out."

And away went Hanningham out of the room as Jones goes off the stage, making, as it were, a point at his exit; not but that, in general, Hanningham was as different a person from Mr. Richard Jones as Mr. Richard Jones, the teacher of elocution, in his study in Chapel Street, Grosvenor Place, is from the same Mr. Richard Jones, on the stage of Drury Lane playhouse. It must be a comical sight to see this vivacious actor in his elevated academy, teaching lawyers to plead, members to speak, judges to sentence, and prelates to preach; but he is a safe man, and never blabs about his pupils—so he deserves the patronage he meets with.

Poor Mrs. Hanningham was left in a state of perplexity: she had never seen her husband so wonderfully gay, so marvellously excited, as he was to-day; and yet in the morning he was in the most melancholy possible humour: some discovery in Maxwell's business had, no doubt, put

him into these high spirits, and he was resolved to let the *dénouement* come upon her as the most agreeable surprise he could contrive.

Never did time seem to move so slowly as during the next three or four hours. At last, however, seven o'clock struck, and punctual to his time was Hanningham—but when he re-appeared his spirits were not the least lowered by their constant exercise during the day. His lady, dressed for dinner, received him with a mixture of pleasure and apprehension lest the state he was in should continue, and she never should subdue him down into rationality again.

Eight o'clock arrived—it was dusk—the dinner was done—overdone—waiting: the servants had twice been into the drawing-room, to know if they were to wait any longer. At five minutes past eight a knock and ring announced an arrival, and a yellow postchaise, come through from Liphook, drew up at the door.

"There they are, by jingo!" said Hanningham, jumping up, and running, or rather tumbling down stairs to receive the visiters.

"Mercy on us!" said Mrs. Hanningham—not quite relishing the enthusiasm which her husband displayed upon the occasion of Miss Maxwell's arrival, and resolving to treat her with a proportionable degree of coolness, so as to mark her disapprobation of his conduct.

"Up stairs—up stairs!" she heard Hanningham say; and then followed a noise of kissing—extremely tantalising, and not, as she thought, altogether called for under these circumstances. "Up stairs—take care—mind the corner—there, up with you—O, never mind the things—up with you."

And amidst all this jumble of words, and scuffling and scrambling, and pushing and thumping, who should rush into the drawing-room, to the astonishment of Mrs. Hanningham, but old Mr. Wilson, the agent from Fayal, and his charming daughter.

CHAPTER XI.

He comes, *my lord!* with all th' expecting joys
Of a young promised lover. LEE.

MISFORTUNES, they say, never come alone—in our case, it seems that arrivals are equally pluralised; we have just been startled by the unexpected appearance of the Fayal agent and his daughter, and we must be prepared for the sudden entrance upon the scene of another character of our drama.

Maxwell, Moss, and Mrs. Apperton, were seated in council, discussing the best mode of proceeding in their affairs, Moss still adhering to his advice of remaining where they were, when Mrs. Dawes suddenly made her appearance in the little drawing-room, of Melrose Cottage, evidently in a state of great agitation, and in a tone between laughing and crying, begged Mr. Moss to step out for a minute.

Maxwell, whose apprehensions for his personal freedom had never abated or relaxed since his return to England, in a moment conjured up a thousand horrible visions. Kate herself was terrified, and Moss, believing something of the sort himself, sallied out as fast as he could.

"I am lost!" said Maxwell; "I know it—the harpies of the law are on me. Kate, I shall never survive it."

"Compose yourself, my dearest father," said Mrs. Apperton; "why needlessly terrify yourself?"

"I know it *is* so," said the agitated old man.

"'Tis he, Mr. Moss!" said Mrs. Dawes.

"Himself," said Moss.

"He is in the back parlour at this very moment," replied the faithful housekeeper.

"Call Kittums," said Godfrey.

"They name *you*, Kate," said Maxwell.

"What is it?" said Mrs. Apperton.

"Don't flurry yourself, dear," said Mrs. Dawes, "it 's he."

"Who?"

"Me, Kate, me," exclaimed Edward Maxwell, rushing from the little parlour; and in another moment Kate was in her fond brother's arms.

"Is it my boy?" said Maxwell, "then something decisive has occurred. No trifling object would have brought him to England—of that I am convinced."

The scene at Melrose Cottage was most rapidly changed from doubt and apprehension to pleasure, and, it must be confessed, curiosity; for it was quite clear, putting the probability of what it might be out of the question, that Edward was full charged with something of first-rate importance to the family.

It was not, however, to be expected that poor Edward could immediately unburthen himself of his secret, whatever it was, while floods of enquiries upon every minor point poured in upon him, and while Mrs. Dawes remained admiring and wondering at the great improvement which she saw in her young favourite's personal appearance. By degrees they ascertained that he had been eleven days on his voyage, that he had been put ashore at Cowes, and that he had arrived *via* Newport and Wooton-bridge, at Ryde; but what the object he had in view in quitting Madeira was, they had not yet discovered, nor, strange to say, did Edward appear able to explain.

In fact, Edward had a communication to make of the most vital importance to all their prospects and future proceedings; but he was apprehensive of exciting too great a sensation by declaring it at once: indeed, his object was to get one of the party alone, to whom he might divulge the truth, and then, in combination with that individual, inform the person most of all interested in his narrative: however, as it turned out, he was relieved from his embarrassment without much manœuvring.

"Edward, dear," said Kate, "you are in mourning."

"Yes, Kate," said young Maxwell, "and so will you be, I conclude, very shortly."

"How do you mean?" said the elder Maxwell. "What has happened?"

Edward made a sign to his father, unperceived by his sister, which conveyed the truth to his mind.

" Kate, my love," said Maxwell, " go to your room for a few minutes — it will be better. Edward has something to communicate — let us hear what it is."

" She may remain," said Edward; " but she must prepare to hear strange things — important things — to her, most of all, important."

" Do they relate to Apperton?" said Maxwell.

" They do," replied Edward.

" Where is he?" said Moss; " what have you done with him?"

" I can hear all," said Kate.

" I should think you might, Kittums," said Moss.

" I forewarn you of a shock," said Edward; " perhaps the dress I wear has already driven your thoughts into the right channel. — Apperton is dead!"

" That's just what I anticipated," said Moss.

From the manner in which Kate received the announcement of her widowhood, little could be gathered as to the precise nature of her feelings: she burst into tears. Edward offered her his arm to lean on, and she quitted the room. A violent affectation of grief would have been absurd, because grief, sincerely, she could not feel for such a happy riddance. The tumult which the intelligence excited in her bosom arose, no doubt, from mingled sentiments, and she was handed over to the care of Mrs. Dawes, under whose tender management she was more likely to recover her calmness and serenity.

It appeared from Edward's account of the last days of Apperton, that he had attended him constantly and assiduously through his illness, which gained daily upon him, and at last terminated fatally in about three weeks after his arrival at Madeira. Before his death, the unhappy victim of low ambition and the pride of wealth, disclosed all that part of his history which was involved in obscurity, and admitted to Edward that when he found Maxwell's property gone, in a great measure, his object was to alarm him with the threat of immediate danger, and drive him away from England. That he had made every arrangement to facilitate his departure, and built the golden bridge

for one, in whom, if he had staid, he could only have expected to find a serious enemy.

When Maxwell was gone, Apperton too late recollected that his signature was necessary to various transfers and endorsements, without which he could not carry his plans into execution, and he had recourse to the desperate expedient of forging his name. This scheme succeeded in two or three instances, but detection followed, and nothing but a precipitate retreat saved his life; while his brother-in-law, having been detected in uttering one of the fallacious securities, had been tried, convicted, and, as we already know, sentenced to transportation for fourteen years.

If repentance, apparently sincere, may be permitted to weigh with human beings, as we are taught to believe it does with the Divinity, Apperton's sufferings, his anxiety to atone for his faults, and the care with which, through all his difficulties, he had preserved certain documents which would be of the highest advantage to Maxwell, gave him a strong claim to be forgiven. It appeared that, when he found himself driven to the last extremity, he proceeded to one of the outports, and instead of taking a passage to America in the character of a gentleman, entered himself as a common sailor, of whose vocation he assumed the dress and labour, and literally worked his way before the mast, to the United States: there he was seized with the yellow fever, which acting upon a constitution considerably reduced by the total change of habit and subsistence, he was given over. Nature, however, rallied; and as he was told that a sea voyage would more probably be serviceable to him than any thing else, he forthwith entered himself on board the Jonadab Adams, which he left only to expire in Edward's arms.

The contents of the case, or haversack, to which reference has before been made, were, in the highest degree, important to Maxwell; they consisted of sundry bonds and securities which Maxwell had given, and which, when things came to the worst, Apperton had paid off with the wreck of the property which came into his possession; so that, in point of fact, not only was Maxwell not involved to the amount of a guinea beyond the first great loss, but at

the present moment upwards of twenty thousand pounds remained in his name in the three per cents., which Apperton had been unable to get hold of. Thus it appeared that, after all, if Apperton had acted fairly, and contented himself by meeting the misfortunes which assailed him manfully, he never need have had recourse to crime to atone for what, at worst, might, after all, have been only indiscretion.

It was, indeed, a wonderful change of scene for Maxwell and his daughter. The old gentleman proceeded to Kate's room, and there divulged to her the particulars which Edward had related, while the young gentleman and Moss, who hated voyages practically, but very much relished "hearing tell of them," mutually edified each other—the one by detailing, and the other by listening to the history of his progress from Funchal to Cowes. Of course, there was now no necessity for further concealment—no need of continued disguise: their business and duty called them to London, whither, it appeared to Edward Maxwell, he ought, at all events, immediately to repair, seeing that he had, for the advancement of his own objects, taken upon himself the responsibility of quitting the post which had been confidentially assigned to him.

But was it the positive necessity for his being the bearer of Apperton's last communications, or the packet which contained the important securities, that really led him to undertake the expedition to England? No doubt he could better explain the occurrences, and describe the sort of state in which his brother-in-law's mind and feelings appeared to be, at the time of his death, than any one else; and it was, above all, a very agreeable thing to be the bearer of favourable intelligence; but none of these, as I believe, would have driven him to the decision of leaving the wine-pipes and warehouses, if he had not accidentally discovered the picture of his long-sought Maria. It was evident, by her picture being in *that* house, that she must somehow be connected with the people to whom the house belonged. Half an hour's personal communication with his partner would do more to elucidate the mystery than half a year's

correspondence, where letters and answers cannot be exchanged with any certainty as to time.

When Kate returned to the drawing-room, she appeared calm and tranquil, but the placidity of her grief was occasionally interrupted by tears, which she could not control; their cause and origin I do not attempt to seek or display. However, while Maxwell retired for the purpose of examining the papers of which Edward was the bearer, Moss and she were engaged in a conversation touching her future prospects, which, it must be admitted, even if delicate in itself, was, at all events, somewhat premature.

"Well, Kittums," said Godfrey, feeding his nose with a huge pinch of snuff, "what'll the Charley cretur do now?"

"My dear Mr. Moss," said Kate, "how can you, at a moment like this, speak on a subject ——"

"Which you do nothing but think about," said Moss. "Bou, Kittums! I know what woman creturs are—who can suppose you ever cared one penny for that sixteen-stringed Jack of a cretur as died in the hospital?"

"Respect to the dead," said Kate.

"Oh! respect to the dead," repeated Moss; "why you might as well say that Hanningham respects *his* father—the worthy gentleman as cut his partner's throat, or shot him, or whatever it was. Did Apperton respect any of *you*, or any of your property, when he was alive, eh?"

"He has made all the atonement in his power," said Kate.

"Rather latish," said Moss. "Suppose he had not accidentally fallen in with Neddums, what would have gone with his atonement? No; he saved his own neck, after having squandered all your money. Now, I want to know where Master Somerford is, and what he'll do?"

"What should he do?" said Mrs. Apperton.

"What!" said Moss. "Come, come, Kittums! none o' your double faces with me—none of your Janus fancies—it's a good job that the old lord cretur, whoever he was, wouldn't have nothing to say to him, or else ——"

"Indeed, Mr. Moss," said Kate, "I must entreat of you to talk of something else. I am sure you would not

willingly give me pain; and the conversation has taken a turn which will drive me from the room if you continue it."

"I hate affectation," said Moss; "but I have done. I suppose you must take a little time to come round, and so till after dinner I'll have done; but then——"

"Well, well, any time except now," said Kate, glad to parry a dialogue which, while it brought the true nature of her feelings somewhat too painfully before her eyes, agitated and disturbed her beyond endurance. She had lost a husband who had been no husband to her; who had forfeited every claim to her affection or esteem. The news was of so recent a date, that it seemed like a dream, scarcely possible to be real; and then, as Moss said—but which he should not have said—her speculations upon the conduct of Somerford, who had never communicated with her since her return to England, were equally wild and complicated. It was true, that Charles could not correspond with her, because he was ignorant of the name they had assumed, and of the place to which they had retired; but he knew of their residence in Madeira.

Upon the return of the Maxwells to the drawing-room, the first burst of surprise and sorrow—if there were any—having subsided, the members of the family were able to converse upon the topic, so new and so deeply interesting to them, with calmness and composure. It turned out, that Maxwell still possessed available property to an amount sufficient to afford him a competence in retirement, and after his death to secure his Kate from difficulty or embarrassment; it was therefore agreed upon, that the family should proceed forthwith to London; and Kate, as ladies are always the best correspondents, was deputed to write to Mrs. Hanningham, announcing the events that had occurred, the arrival of Edward, his anxiety to see his partner, and justify his abandonment of his post at Madeira, and to solicit her good offices in procuring them rooms and accommodations in their neighbourhood in London, in which great metropolis it was their intention to arrive in the course of the following evening.

"And now," said Edward to his sister, "now that I have brought you such satisfactory—not satisfactory, I

mean decisive — news of your late husband, what have *you* done for me with regard to my beautiful vision; the mystery about whom is increased in a tenfold degree, by the circumstance which I announced to you about the picture?"

"Do not think me cruel," said the widow; "do not believe that I could trifle with your feelings for a moment, but I have not dared to communicate to your father the discovery you made. Indeed, if you really feel that affection for me, which I have every reason to believe you do, you must evince it, by promising me not to drop one syllable upon the subject of that person at present. If your father were aware that you had seen that portrait, his injunctions with respect to the mention of the subject would be of the strongest kind; therefore occupy yourself for the present in the numerous affairs to which circumstances have drawn your attention. But let me implore you, trust to me to bring *that* matter forward at a season more favourable than the present."

"But surely," said Edward, "when I see Hanningham, I may speak to him on the subject of the picture which I found in his house."

"The pictures were not *his*," said Kate; "I knew of those pictures when you did not, and mischief incalculable may now ensue from your having dragged them into light. However, with respect to all but the one, I conclude you are indifferent — and mark me! believe me when I tell you, that a question, an observation from you to Hanningham upon the subject of that portrait, destroys at once, inevitably, entirely, and eternally, your hopes, vague as they may be now, about the being upon whom your affections are so devotedly fixed."

"But how came those pictures in his possession?"

"They belonged to his late father," said Katherine; "they were clandestinely removed from England at the time of his execution. None of them should have been seen; this however is a mere error — and may be repaired: but the history which attaches to that young creature is such, that I tell you again, and for the last time, a word relative to the likeness, addressed to your partner, extinguishes all hope about the original, and perhaps would have

the effect of breaking off even the mercantile connection which so happily exists between you now."

Poor Edward, who saw the mystery which he had hoped to dissipate thicken as he approached it, was considerably distressed at this solemn declaration of his sister; and the more so, because he reposed the most implicit confidence in her, and was perfectly assured that unless she were well convinced of the necessity of the course she suggested, she would not have advised him to pursue it. He began almost to wish that he had remained where he was, living upon hopes and expectations, with a true resemblance of his idol before him, instead of having put himself in a situation to have those hopes and expectations overthrown, with the loss of the portrait, and with no chance of obtaining the original.

However, the domestic happiness of the family was enough to live on, for one day, at all events, without alloy; and Edward, with a resolution, often made but seldom kept by lovers, determined that he would not think about his mysterious Maria for the next twelve hours. Maxwell's countenance, as he gazed upon his poor daughter, and felt conscious that let what might happen, she would be secure from the buffettings of fortune, and anticipated a return to his former habits and associations, bespoke sentiments which language would feebly describe: even Moss smiled, and grumbled not; and poor old Mrs. Dawes was busier than a bee, running in and out, and up and down, making preparations for the little family banquet of the day, and their departure for the metropolis on the morrow.

Little did these short-sighted, mole-eyed mortals anticipate what was to happen on that morrow, or what extraordinary changes, even in this changeable state, were to take place within the next eight-and-forty hours; but it is lucky that men and women are not gifted with prescience, unless indeed the gift were universally accompanied by the power and means of avoiding the conesquences, which such an instinctive perception would so fearfully exhibit. As it was, the day went on; passions and feelings subsided into a calm interchange of thoughts and affections; and it must be confessed, qualified as all earthly advantages

naturally are, by some countervailing evil, the Maxwells had never been so nearly happy as they now were, since the good old times before Mrs. Maxwell died, and Charles Somerford had been sent abroad.

Squills, who to medical ability united personal kindness and assiduity, in behalf of his friends, was very soon let into the mystery, or rather the history, of Edward's arrival, and his brother-in-law's death, and the earnestness of his manner, and the warmth of feeling which he expressed on the occasion, added to a "double-barrelled" hint of Moss's, that he would be pleased to dine with them the last day of their stay, and, moreover, would be uncommonly useful in the morning, in getting their luggage down to the pier-head, and civilising the boatmen, and, in short, smoothing their exit from the island, induced the surgeon, after a brief conference with Kate, to beg him to join the little family party, they hoped not for the last time, although perhaps for the last time *there*. And accordingly Squills prepared himself for the rural banquet, and left strict orders with Mrs. Squills not to send the usual nine o'clock message by the little boy with the glazed hat and the basket, that he was wanted by a patient; an order which she felt extremely well disposed to obey, seeing that she and her daughters, and son-in-law, were going to tea and quadrilles at Miss Wamble's cottage, at number thirty-two.

There was one of the party at Maxwell's who suffered deeply, but who felt bound to silence by the commands of his sister, and the hope of a favourable result to his taciturnity. Edward was restless and agitated, and more beaten than ever, by finding from Kate that the discovery he had made of the portrait at Madeira, instead of accelerating a favourable termination to his doubts and fears, was in fact a new and almost insurmountable difficulty in the way of settlement. He determined so far, however, to act for himself, as to speak confidentially to his partner Hanningham, explain to him all the foregone circumstances, and, if necessary to his future happiness, pledge him to secrecy as far as related to his father.

To a person in Edward's state of mind, the society and conversation of Squills, all dart, point, wit, and epigram,

parried and returned by Moss in his old way of pooh poohing his adversary down, was any thing but agreeable. He was not used to the style of dialogue in which they were indulging. Of Count Narli, to whose adventures they were perpetually alluding, he had never heard; what Mardo Paste was he did not know; nor was he interested at all in the minute dissections of the tabbies at Ryde, or the little tittle-tattle of its pier; and it must be observed, that even with a mind attuned to amusement, it requires some little habitude, some little personal knowledge of a humorist, before we are able to taste his wit or relish his allusions. Edward withdrew from the small drawing-room to stroll about the place; and Kate, under pretence of fatigue by anticipation, retired to rest; so that Maxwell, Moss, and Squills, had the evening to themselves, and made the ambient air redolent with the fumes of cigars until a late hour.

The morning came — the family re-assembled — the boatmen's barrows were at the door. Squills in advance, and in command; Dawes, wrapped up to vapour-bath heat, for fear of the sea-breeze, and pale as a sheet at the prospect of the twenty minutes' voyage she was about to undertake to Portsmouth; Kate, not yet decently weeded as became her state — for at Ryde sea-weeds were all she could have dressed her sorrow in, at so short a notice — was ready before her father; and Edward, whose whole system seemed on wheels, and whose restlessness and anxiety to see Hanningham nothing could control, was calling his respectable parent, when Mossums was seen standing at the door of "his lodgums," making signs that they would lose the packet, if they did not make haste; which he did, by extending to their extreme length alternately his legs and arms, after the manner of a semaphore, for which character he was about as well qualified as a turtle; however, he made himself understood, and after a run and a good fresh "blow" along the jetty, the party found themselves mustered, boxes, bundles, parcels, packages, and all, on the deck of the steamer — the funnel smoking, the paddles splashing, and the horn blowing its last parting blast. To the word "Go," the wheels responded mu-

sically, and the black boat dashed away the foam from her bows, and, plunging through the water like a "thing of life," soon conveyed her living cargo to the back of the Quebec, where the disembarkation took place in as short a space of time as possible.

Having reached Portsmouth, the next step was to ascertain the best and readiest mode of leaving it again. Moss advocated any conveyance which would accommodate four insides, and proposed securing the entire of one of the stage-coaches for that purpose, as being at once the most economical and expeditious, seeing that he and the Maxwells would occupy the seats within, while Mrs. Dawes might take her journey on the roof; but this very judicious suggestion of Godfrey's could not be acted upon, because none of the London coaches were vacant. There was, indeed, an inside place in one of them, but Godfrey declined it—he had no notion of separation; sink or swim, they would all go together; he was not going up "grumpums" by himself in a corner, with a fat woman, a sick child, a fine lady, and a drunken sailor; and go he would not—so the next best they could do was to proceed to the George *en masse*, and take counsel there of the landlord, who would, no doubt, put them on a course of getting to London forthwith, which should at once be agreeable to them, and profitable to himself.

This proposal was instantly agreed to, and the party walked to the inn, followed and surrounded by barrowmen and porters bearing their various packages of luggage. No sooner had they reached the open door than a peal of bells announced their arrival, and the landlord himself—always a welcome sight at a house of public entertainment, because it gives earnest of his intentions to accommodate his customers to the best of his ability, received them on the threshold.

By one of those common efforts of habitual memory, which very often surprise one in similar cases, the moment the landlord saw the party, he recognised Maxwell, not only as a person known to him by sight, but as bearing the name of Maxwell, and as the Mr. Maxwell who had been at the George some months previous; and with the greatest

courtesy greeted him on his return from the Isle of Wight, to which he knew he was going when he last saw him, and whence he naturally concluded he was now coming back.

"Why, Mack, you are known here," said Moss.

"Yes; luckily it does not signify," said Maxwell; "but I never should have flattered myself that I could live so long in mine host's recollection."

The attention and civility of the landlord were beyond praise; and having been ushered into a drawing-room, Maxwell began his propositions as to the journey, by telling him that he was quite surprised at his remembering him so long.

"We seldom lose the recollection of faces we have once had the pleasure of seeing, sir," said the landlord, "especially when we feel pleased at seeing them again."

"You are very kind," said Maxwell; "we want to get to London this evening, and we are at a loss how to manage as to stowage."

"I think, sir," said the landlord, "you could manage with the chariot; the seat behind holds two, and three inside would not be too much in a roomy carriage."

"Ah, Neddums and Dawes in the dickey," said Moss, "and Kittums inside, between Mack and me."

"A most accommodating arrangement," said Edward.

"I must protest against Dawes having an outside place," said Kate; "and, therefore, if there is any means of her getting to town by a coach, we can manage extremely well."

"You shall have your own way," said Maxwell, "and that will make the affair more simple."

Arrangements were made for the accommodation of Dawes, who was hurried breathless at the top of her speed to a coach-office at the Fountain, and packed into a Rocket or a Regulator, whichever it might have been, with all becoming expedition.

"But," said Maxwell, "with respect to the chariot—can we have it all the way through—to town?"

"The chariot, sir," said the landlord; "is your own carriage—the one you left here when you passed through, sir."

"My carriage!" said the surgeon, who had forgotten, in

the hurry and bustle of the last few months, that he had left his chariot at the same inn, under directions from Apperton, to let it remain there, till sent for; but in a moment collecting himself, and assuming as composed an air as he could command under the influence of strong surprise, he added, "What, did they never send for it, to town, after all?"

"No, sir," said the landlord, "it has been here ever since, and I believe you will admit that we have taken every care of it."

Moss thought both the "creturs" were crazy—it was all a mystery to him, who knew nothing of the arrangement; but the feelings of Kate and her father, when they saw the well-known vehicle at the door, looking as it did in the bright days of prosperity, were not a little agitated! it recalled a thousand recollections, a thousand bitter pangs, but it was necessary to stifle them, and take it as it came to them, simply as a convenient receptacle for themselves and their luggage. Moss, who had not much sentiment about him, could not understand how a thing built of leather and wood, at a tradesman's in Longacre, hung upon springs, and pulled about upon wheels, could inspire any thing like affection, or excite any thing like pleasure or regret; but he was, nevertheless, quite conscious of the comfort it afforded him, and he threw himself into the corner of it with the greatest aptitude, protesting, however, that it smelt a "leetle mouldy or so."

The travellers started, and proceeded without let or hinderance from Horndean to Petersfield, from Petersfield to Liphook, and from Liphook to Guilford. The day was fine, the country looked lovely, and somehow there was an association of comforts in the journey which Kate felt intensely. The idea of having her beloved father in his own country, journeying to the scene and sphere of all his former life, without the awe of consequences, and in his proper name and character, was delightful to her; even the trifling circumstances of the carriage being their own, seemed to add to the strength of the illusion that every thing had taken a turn, and that bright days were yet in store for them.

Maxwell had an objection to entering London in the broad glare of day, in a chariot once so well known, and which, in its time, was as familiar to the public eye as Mr. Heaviside's putty colour, or Dr. Hooper's green, and accordingly suggested a halt at the White Hart for a couple of hours, during which Moss proposed, as a mode of overcoming the *ennui* of a country town, a snack of mutton-chops and kidneys, with a "pickled warnut;" indeed, after the proposition of stopping had once been made, no power of mechanism could have been found strong enough to move him forward; and accordingly, the party took possession of that pleasing apartment which commands the point-blank view of the gothic house opposite, and which is decorated with most loyal and religious prints, thus laudably exhibiting the attachment of the landlord to church and state.

It was at one of the windows of this room that Moss amused himself, by watching the little shopping parties of the belles of Guilford and its vicinity, dragged up and shuffled down the precipitous hill in the street, in little phaetons, some double-bodied, with half-starved horses to do the duty—cruelty vans, with skeleton ponies; and I only regret that space and circumstances do not permit my giving the reader an abstract and brief chronicle of his observations.

The instinct which announces to the camel the approach to water in the desert was nothing to that which indicated to Moss the advent of a mutton-chop. Long before the step of the waiter was heard on the staircase, Godfrey had wriggled himself and his arm-chair from the window to the table; his associates acknowledged the potency of his faculties in that way, and followed his example; they had scarcely ranged themselves round the board when the expected cutlet came.

In the middle of their repast, the arrival of a particularly elegant plain, dark olive-green travelling carriage and four, with two servants in the rumble, created a sensation — but not of sufficient importance to abstract the "lunchers," who to do them justice, performed their parts to admiration. After they had concluded the operation, and strayed to the

window, Moss's notice was attracted by seeing a tall gentleman in black, looking very attentively at Maxwell's carriage, which had been left in the street in front of the house, and evidently making enquiries concerning it of one of the people belonging to the inn, who it seemed equally clear was unable to afford the information he was seeking.

"Kittums," said Moss, "come here — I'll show you something — promise not to scream out and make a Tom Noddy of yourself. Look here! — here's Charles Somerford himself, if ever I saw him in my life."

Kate approached with caution, although she rather attributed Godfrey's announcement to a joke to than any thing like reality. She saw, and in an instant recognised Charles — it was indeed he himself.

Moss proceeded to attract his attention by coughing at the window, in a peculiar manner familiar to Charles's ear, if he recollected it; but Kate drew Mousetrap back, and implored him, as he valued her happiness, her respectability, instantly to come away, and not render her liable to the imputation of following or intruding herself upon her former lover, especially at the very moment when she had heard of the removal of the only obstacle to their union. Moss saw that she was right, and immediately abstained from his proceedings; but nevertheless determined to take upon himself the responsibility of going and speaking to Somerford, if Somerford it should be, and by so doing, lead, as he thought would be best, to a general reconciliation between the parties, who appeared really to have been thrown together by some providential interference for the purpose.

In pursuance of his plan, Moss retired; and it would be difficult to depict the feelings of Kate as she saw him quit the room — the ardent desire she felt to witness his meeting with Somerford, the manner in which he greeted him, and the sort of feeling he exhibited at the renovation of their friendship. Maxwell and Edward had previously left the inn for a stroll, which in Guilford is generally an interesting thing, seeing that it is a goodly town, and rich in matters of antiquity. Kate, stepping on tiptoe to the window, watched and saw, listened and heard.

"Why, Moss," said Somerford, "is it possible—you here? Where are the Maxwells? I knew it was *their* carriage."

Here the conversation subsided into a low tone; Moss put his arm through Charles's, and walked slowly down the street with him. Kate followed them with her eyes—she saw Charles looking—she saw Moss point with his finger, as if to indicate the very spot where she was—she beheld him relating something—what, she could not exactly guess—but she saw her own Charles Somerford hastily break from Moss, and leap, as it were with joy, in the open street; next she saw him turn Godfrey round, and lug him along upwards towards the inn, Moss shaking with the exercise and an April sensation of laughing and crying. The struggle did not last long; Charles cast off his Mentor, and, entering the house, dashed up stairs. All that Kate saw was his rush into the room; of what subsequently happened, she was utterly unconscious, till she found herself seated on the sofa, Charles tenderly watching her recovery, her father holding her burning hand in his, with Edward by his side, and Godfrey Moss at the round table in the middle of the room, making himself, *sub silentio*, a particularly dark brown tumbler of brandy and water.

"This is the most extraordinary, most providential meeting that could have been imagined," said Charles: "I was crossing to Richmond from Sussex, where I have been on some melancholy business; and the idea of intersecting you, whom of all people in the world I was most anxious to meet; at a time, too," added he, in a subdued tone of voice, "when our meeting might be so satisfactory——"

"Ah! well, Charley, boy," said Moss, "what is to be, is; and what will be, will: and so now come none of your preaching—come along with us. We'll carry you up to town—there's a place outside along with Neddums, and you creturs can talk over your love affairs."

"What," said Charles, "has he any love affairs?"

"No, no," said Maxwell; "nonsense—they are only joking."

Ned and Charles exchanged looks, which induced the latter to think there was no joke in the matter.

"But won't that do?" said Moss; "that's a good arrangement."

"I am going to Richmond," said Charles; "and must——"

"How d' ye travel?" said Moss.

"I have a carriage here," said Somerford.

"Oh!' said Moss, "that comes of Indy—

'When I'm rich, I rides in chaises.'

That's the way, is it?—walks about with a sprig of jasmine in his button-hole, and does um dandy."

A gentle tap at the door produced the permission to "come in;" and a servant in black, standing six feet two without his shoes, with buckskins and boots which would have made Brummell in his day jealous, presented himself.

Moss stared, and was about to be facetious; the Maxwells were rather puzzled to know who was wanted; when the man, approaching Charles, said in a low voice, "The horses are ready, my lord, whenever your lordship is."

This little speech startled the whole party.

"Order them round, then," said Charles; "we are all going, I fancy," added he, addressing his companions, having already seen that Maxwell's carriage was prepared for starting.

"Yes, my lord," said the servant, and departed.

A moment's pause succeeded this short scene.

"I believe," said Charles, "my change of station in the world is somewhat of a novelty to you: you are not aware of my accession to the title of my grandfather."

"Grand——who?" said Moss.

"Pray be quiet, dear Godfrey," said Maxwell, who, between ourselves, had an inherent affection for a lord—even for the youngest Irish baron, or the silliest Irish bishop—I am not quite sure whether it would not have gone down to the depths of a lord mayor of York;—"how d' ye mean, Charles?"

"To you, my dear sir," said Somerford, "and yours, I am, and always shall be, Charles Somerford; but to the world I am Lord Lessingham. Ask me nothing about it now, because I have not time to tell, nor you to hear, t

whole of a very extraordinary history; but if you will do that, which I think will be a wiser thing than going on to town to-night, come with me to Richmond *en masse;* I will exert my first right of *seigneurie* by receiving you, and giving you, at all events, a warm and hospitable reception."

Kate did not know what to say or to do: there was an apparent impropriety in her going on a visit to Charles, even though he were a lord (which she could scarcely bring herself to believe), at the moment when she had just heard of her husband's death; besides, she had no maid. Dawes, who, to be sure, was but an antiquated specimen of a soubrette, was absent, and there were a thousand other reasons. However, a sort of compromise was made; and it was agreed that Kate and her father should, at all events, travel in his lordship's carriage as far as Kingston, and that Ned and Godfrey Moss should discuss the events of the day, *tête-à-tête,* in Maxwell's chariot; an arrangement to which Moss gladly agreed, as giving him more room,—taking particular care, however, upon starting, to let the post-boys understand that the old gentleman with the white head in my lord's coach was to pay for the horses.

In the course of their progress to Kingston, where Lord Lessingham took his leave of them for his villa, all those events and circumstances which are already known to the reader were communicated by the noble baron to his old and esteemed friends; and it was also arranged, at Katharine's wish, that she and her father should proceed direct for London to Hanningham's, where they were expected; an arrangement which was sanctioned by Charles, only on the condition that on the following day they would pay him a visit in his retirement, to which he felt a desire to introduce them, not only for the gratification of feelings personal to himself, but that he might, instantly and under the roof of that repentant grandfather to whom he owed all, sanctify, as it were, the resolution he had never abandoned—of making Katharine his wife, should the opportunity ever offer itself.

At Kingston they separated; and the surgeon's carriage proceeded, *via* Putney, to the lodgings of the Hanning-

hams; Lord Lessingham having, however, seized on one of the party as a hostage, whom he promised to deliver up by two o'clock on the following day. This was Edward. He saw he was out of spirits; he was anxious to ascertain the cause of his chagrin, and if there were any means in his power of overcoming it. Besides, he was quite alone at Richmond; and the suddenly subsiding into solitude, after the excitement of the morning, would have been doubly irksome. So, overcome by all the persuasions which were made use of, Edward, whose anxiety to get to London was a little qualified by the certainty that he should have an opportunity of talking privately and confidentially with Somerford that evening, agreed to the kind proposal of his noble friend, and accompanied him to his villa.

The day terminated, as far as the Maxwells were concerned, in a happy reception by Hanningham and his wife. None of these Moss knew; and when he came into the drawing-room, and saw Wilson and Miss Wilson, and some other strangers seated there, he stopped short, told Kittums to say nothing about him, and rolled himself and his portmanteau off to his club, where he dined at his ease, took his full swig of port, and the *chasse* which he generally adopted, promising to call the next day and begin his new acquaintance, before he was tired with a seventy-mile journey, and a six-mile voyage.

The greetings and recognitions were, on all hands, warm and agreeable; and the account of the day's adventures was received with the greatest pleasure and sympathy by Katherine's female friends. Hanningham and Maxwell entered into a lengthened and interesting conversation in a corner of the room; and old Wilson whispered Kate, that, let who in the world be happy, *he* was the happiest man in existence.

In such a state of perfect bliss, what a cruelty it would be to introduce any topic likely to curdle the mass of joy! let us therefore wish the assembled party good night, not, however, without the expectation of reaping a "pretty particular harvest" of adventures on the morrow.

CHAPTER XII.

Submit thy fate to Heaven's indulgent care,
Though all seems lost, 't is impious to despair.
The tracks of Providence like rivers wind —
Here, run before us — there, retreat behind;
And though immerged in earth from human eyes,
Again break forth, and more conspicuous rise. HIGGONS.

NOTHING could have answered better than the whole arrangement of the family party; for Edward, who, being a stranger to the Wilsons, would naturally have felt shy and ill at ease in their company, while bursting with anxiety to open his heart to Hanningham, passed with his old friend Lord Lessingham an evening of perfect enjoyment. Those who know what love is, and what lovers are, will immediately comprehend that he talked of nothing from dinner-time until bed-time, but of himself and his mysterious Maria — to Charles he unburthened his whole heart, and so deeply interested him in his fate, that his lordship pledged himself to aid his designs and further his views with regard to her, to the utmost extent of his power and ability.

This was consolatory, agreeable, and encouraging to Edward; but there were other points gained during their *tete-à-tête*, which were even more important to the interests of the Maxwell family, as matters now stood. Charles, aware that in so early a stage of Kate's widowhood, any declaration made to her, of his feelings towards her personally, would be highly indelicate, was equally conscious that he might, without binding Edward to any thing like secrecy or concealment of the fact from his sister, distinctly express to him, that the sole object of his ambition, the great aim of his life, was to secure her hand as his wife, when the season which the custom of the world has assigned to weeds and weeping should have passed by. It is true, after Charles's conduct and conversation during their journey towards town, Kate could have had no doubt of the constancy and sincerity of his affection for her; but he appeared anxious, beyond any thing that might be implied, to bind himself to her brother, as to one, who

would hereafter hold him responsible for the declaration he made.

Edward, in relating all the proceedings of Apperton to his newly found friend, only realised, as his lordship said, the opinion he formed of the man at his first and only interview—the extent of his atrocities were even yet to be developed; for it seemed that, after having been arrested, after having given notice of taking the benefit of the insolvent act, and after having involved three or four persons who still had faith in his honour and credit, as his sureties for the rules of the King's Bench Prison, to which he was committed, his criminal transactions began so rapidly to divulge themselves, that all considerations were sacrificed to his personal safety, and he fled the country, leaving the unhappy dupes, who had placed a confidence in him, to reimburse the marshal of the prison in the whole amount of the debts for which he had been confined.

When the morning arrived, and Edward found himself in the terrestrial paradise which now belonged to his friend, it still seemed likea dream—a bright, beautiful dream, wanting but one additional charm to make it perfect. Richmond, that looks, every day one sees it, as if it were dressed to look lovely on that day alone, was in all its beauty. There was a repose, a fragrance, a charm about it all, that kept the friends lingering on the lawn, still talking on their favourite themes, until two o'clock, when they resolved—still continuing their conversation in the same strain no doubt—to proceed to London to join the family party; for whose reception at the villa in the evening, Lord Lessingham had given directions that every preparation should be made. Accordingly they started for town, where stranger and more important events had been in the course of occurrence than even they could anticipate.

After an evening, perhaps even more interesting to the parties concerned than that which the two friends passed at Richmond, the family coterie in London assembled at breakfast; Hanningham's feelings were evidently so much excited that he could scarcely keep himself quiet, and old Maxwell and Wilson sat together, enjoying between themselves, not exactly a joke—for it appeared to be something

more important than that—but a secret, which evidently gave them the most heartfelt satisfaction, but which they seemed determined not to impart for the benefit of their friends.

"To-day, at twelve o'clock," said Hanningham, "I am to fulfil a duty which I owe to the reputation of a beloved parent, whose name has been branded and whose character has been stigmatised as a murderer. The real culprit, as I have already told you, has admitted himself the man—to-morrow he suffers for another crime, and hopes to make some atonement for his sins by confessing to-day, before a competent authority, the whole of the bloody transaction in which he, and he alone, was concerned. It will be most satisfactory to me," continued Hanningham, "if Mr. Maxwell, and Mr. Moss (for Godfrey had gone to breakfast with them—the new-laid eggums, and the hammums, were too strong an inducement to be withstood), and Mr. Wilson, would accompany me to Newgate, where the proceeding is to take place, as the more witnesses there are to such a solemn act of justice, the more gratifying it will be to a son anxious for the reputation of a parent."

"What!" said Moss, "must we go poking our noses through the iron bars and fetters—all among the clankum creturs wot kills one another?"

"A little sacrifice of personal comfort," said Maxwell, "for a few minutes, Moss, will be amply repaid by the satisfaction you will derive from seeing Hanningham made happy."

"Oh, I am ready," said Moss; "I can't walk, you know—carry me any where—I'll go."

And accordingly preparations were made; and as time drew on, Hanningham's carriage was at the door, and within it were stowed the three old gentlemen, and the noble-minded son, whose whole heart and soul were in the vindication of his calumniated parent.

"This," said Wilson, as they passed along the streets, "is a most curious, a most wonderful event. I am scarcely prepared for what I am to see in the dreadful receptacle to which we are going; my heart sickens."

"You must bear up," said Maxwell: "it is absolutely

essential you should be with us: screw your courage to the sticking place; your rustication in Fayal has not so entirely uncivilised you that you cannot endure the sight of a prison."

"Pray remain with us," said Hanningham; "assure yourself you will be repaid for the struggle."

They reached the door of the keeper's house, into which they were admitted. They there found, already arrived, the persons who were to receive the confession, officially, for the secretary of state for the home department—a process which Moss, who had but a confused notion of law, and whose nerves, moreover, were entirely unstrung by the sight of certain iron bars placed perpendicularly on the outer side of the windows of the very smart apartment in which they were assembled, could not help thinking a work of supererogation. "It may be all vastly well," thought he, "for Hanningham to establish his father's innocence in the minds of those who knew him, but what the deuce is the use of troubling the secretary of state or the crown about a cretur who has been dead this year and a half, or whatever it is?"

After a certain degree of muttering and murmuring, a rattling of keys and clattering were heard—the door of the room opened, and, preceded by a couple of turnkeys, the "procession" moved, through sundry dark and gloomy passages, to the door of the cell in which Hall was incarcerated. It was opened, and by a dim light the visiters discovered the unhappy culprit stretched on his pallet, in earnest conversation with the ordinary of the prison.

The agitation of Wilson at the sight before him was so great, that it was with difficulty he could be supported to the seat which the clergyman gave up to him. Hall raised himself to receive the expected visiters; and the official person who accompanied them, taking a candle (the only light in the cell) in his hand, read over, slowly and distinctly, the confession which Hall had made, and which he now attested by his signature. Wilson, who had attentively watched every syllable of this declaration, became more violently affected towards its conclusion; and when Hall signed the paper, a mingled scream and groan burst

from the old gentleman, who, in a moment after, fell senseless on the floor.

"What has happened?" said Hall. "More mischief —more murder! am I destined to destroy—destroy—destroy!"

"No," said Hanningham; "calm yourself—compose yourself—this is nothing. He will recover—raise him, bathe his temples: he will be better in a minute."

"He!" screamed Hall, as his eyes glared on the pale face of the agitated sufferer. "Who is he!—Great God preserve me!—it is my friend—my master!—Hanningham himself!—safe, safe—alive and safe!"

The parties to this scene were now so highly excited, that it was deemed expedient to remove them from it; but Hall had seized the hand of Wilson, or rather the elder Hanningham—for Hanningham it *was*—and grasped it with a firmness which resisted all efforts to disengage it. Tears flowed in torrents from the wretched culprit's eyes, and it was not until both had so far recovered, that the one could pronounce the word of forgiveness, and the other hear it, with something like composure, that they were separated.

After such a meeting, such a discovery, and such a parting, it may be easily imagined that the party were not a little relieved by a return to the light and air, even of London. Hanningham had achieved a triumph worthy of a son, to which he had been led while earnestly endeavouring to evince his gratitude for conduct on the part of Maxwell, which alone could have rendered his success efficient. What Maxwell did, remains to be seen.

When they reached home, they found Lord Lessingham and Edward waiting their arrival. Mrs. Apperton and Miss Wilson were out, gone shopping, in order to procure the necessary materials for the former's widowhood; for although decency and propriety rendered it absolutely necessary that she should assume mourning, neither the period of her husband's death, nor the general character of their connection, rendered it imperative upon her to consign herself to positive seclusion, or deny herself the privilege of choosing her own crape, and arranging her own love.

Edward and young Hanningham were, of course, in an instant engaged on topics of mutual interest; and the elder Hanningham was, by the general advice of the party, consigned to his room and sofa, to re-collect his scattered thoughts and spirits, after a scene which not only cleared his character from crime, but restored him to his family and friends, and to society in general.

It was after Edward and his friend had in some degree satisfied themselves with their conversation, that Maxwell, taking advantage of the temporary absence of young Hanningham and his wife, Mrs. Apperton, and Miss Wilson (all of whom knew the story), disclosed to his son and Lord Lessingham the nature of the secret which Kate had discovered — on which his fate and reputation had hitherto hung, but which, now that his professional career was ended, and the innocence of Hanningham established, was no longer of importance.

It appeared that the body of Hanningham had been procured by one of Maxwell's agents for the purpose of dissection, and had, on the stormy evening of the dreadful day of his supposed execution, been brought in the usual manner to the private entrance of his residence. That after the departure of his pupils, Maxwell had retired to his study, and, before returning to the drawing-room, visited the receptacle for the dead, to see that all was safe for the night. Here, to his amazement and surprise, his ears were assailed by a faint groan and a sigh — he carried his light to the spot whence the sound proceeded, and saw, not only that the human being before him, was not dead, but actually breathing and moving.

He was aware who the man was — he had taken great interest in the case — in the examination — the charge — the trial, and the condemnation, and he had always maintained an opinion of his innocence; he was here — before him — alone — and in his power. To preserve him was to entail ruin on himself; for besides bringing down the heaviest penalty of the law in furthering his escape, the developement of the fact would involve the disclosure of the system by which the surgical theatres are furnished with

subjects. All was at stake: Hanningham had been declared guilty of murder — had, in the eye of the world, suffered the extreme punishment of the law, and was dead — not only legally, but, as the people believed, physically.

He paused to consider — a blow would end the struggle between returning vitality and death — a blow, too, which it was almost his duty to give, and such a blow as, *in more than one similar case, has been given*, was all that was wanting to end the mystery; but could he, feeling, as he did, that the man had been unjustly convicted, — could he complete what the law had failed to consummate? The case was trying — fearful — hazardous: Maxwell, however, had made up his mind.

First securing the door which separated the dwelling-house from the surgery, he raised the unhappy sufferer, and placed him in a sitting posture — he found life and animation rapidly returning — he bled his unconscious patient — the blood flowed — flowed freely, and the wretched sufferer soon began to seem conscious of the objects round him; but it required care, and patience, and time, and attention to manage such a resuscitation. These Maxwell devoted to it.

It would be useless and unprofitable to go through the details of the recovery of the unfortunate Hanningham, who at length became sufficiently renovated to be removed by Maxwell, with great care and caution, up the back stairs of the house to his own room. The period he chose for the transit was during the supper-hour of the servants; he felt secure that his path would not then be crossed by any of the establishment: he succeeded in assisting, almost carrying, his trembling companion to the apartment: there arrived, he furnished him with clothes from his own wardrobe, administered such cordials as he considered essential to his restoration, and then, locking the door of his room, and bringing away the key, left him in safety, while he went down to join his family, as if he had been only pursuing the ordinary course of his studies.

It was on the night, the reader will recollect, that a sound of something falling heavily in the room above, alarmed

the family party. Hanningham, miscalculating his strength, had ventured to attempt to cross the apartment, but growing giddy, fell backwards into the chair whence he had essayed to move. Maxwell hurried up, and soon ascertained the cause of the noise; it will also be recollected that Katharine followed abruptly, and rushing into the apartment, beheld her father in the act of administering assistance to the pale and agitated stranger.

If, as she often afterwards said, her father had then simply bound her to secrecy as to what she had actually seen, without permitting her to know more of the history with which the exhibition was connected, all would have been well; for she would have felt solemnly engaged never to reveal it, and even if she had violated her parent's confidence, she could have told nothing to inculpate him; but he, in his agitation, and in the desire of obtaining an entire assurance of fidelity from his child, by making the most unreserved confidence, imparted the whole fact to her, expressing, at the same time, his determination to save the unfortunate man, or perish in the attempt.

With this view, after the family had retired to rest, he and his weakened companion, somewhat restored by the care which had been bestowed on him, quitted the house, and proceeded to the outskirts of the town, in a direction which Hanningham knew his daughter might easily reach; there Maxwell attended him, staid with him through the night, nor left him until he found him safely housed, and in the care of his exemplary child, whose unceasing and unremitting affection and attention to her suffering parent during his tedious imprisonment, and in the day of death itself, had been beyond all praise.

"It was after having made these arrangements," said Maxwell, "that I returned home, and was soundly rated by Mousetrap, for pottering all over the country, guinea hunting. I did not defend myself against this charge, I recollect; but I had great and manifold difficulties to contend with after that. To send Hanningham to his son at Madeira would have been to betray the whole business, in which, of course, I could not personally appear; however, I

managed to engage a passage for him and his daughter to Fayal, a place which they only knew by name, and certainly never expected to visit. Thither they were to go under the name of Wilson."

"Our confidential agent," exclaimed Edward — "now I see."

"But the difficulty," continued Maxwell, "was to elude the vigilance of observation between London and Portsmouth, where the vessel, bound to Fayal, lay; therefore it was, that I took the precaution to engage, for a few pounds, a passage round from the river to Portsmouth, in a ship called the Wilhelmina."

"Captain Randolph?" said Edward.

"Exactly so," said Maxwell; "and in the dusk of the evening before she sailed, I contrived to bring Hanningham in my carriage to the water-side from the lodging I had secured for him, and saw him safe into the merchant ship, from which he was not to depart until his transhipment into the Fayalese brig, at Spithead; and by midnight they were under way."

"And the daughter, sir — Miss Hanningham," said Charles.

"She remained behind in town, for a day or two, to avoid any suspicion," said Maxwell, "when she proceeded direct to join her father, and arrived on board the vessel where he was, on the evening after he had been put into her, from the ship. Much odium did I incur — much calumny did I encounter, I believe, from the necessity which occurred of my meeting that lovely girl in various parts of the town — for, of course, I never dared venture to the place by daylight where her father lay concealed. Even my own son, I believe, suspected me of some improper flirtation, and once took upon himself to watch my proceedings in the Green Park."

"The Green Park!" cried Edward, leaping from his chair in ecstasy. "Do you mean, my dearest father — I say, do you mean that the beloved creature, who was your companion in the Green Park, on that day, is Hanningham's sister — the sister of my friend? This, then, accounts for the picture."

"The picture!" said Maxwell; "I know nothing about pictures, Ned — but here — here is the charming original herself!"

And at that moment the folding doors between the drawing-rooms were thrown open, and the blushing, trembling, Maria Hanningham sank into the arms of Mr. Edward Maxwell, as naturally as if they had been prepared for the scene by a dozen rehearsals.

"Now," said Maxwell, "you are fully aware of the importance of the secret I had to conceal — now you see the danger and difficulty which would have accrued to us all, by any countenance or furtherance of the connection between Maria and you — and now you are able to judge of the trials I have undergone, the reward of which, and of my earnest prayers to Providence has been, this general restoration of us all, to peace and happiness."

Maxwell, in the midst of the good feeling which really and truly actuated him throughout the whole of this complicated business, had, it will be seen, the good taste not to give the real and true reason why he decidedly objected to his son's marriage with Maria. The entire acquittal of Hanningham had set the question at rest, and what need was there of recurring to past difficulties?

It was now Maria's turn to explain to Edward that her acquaintance with the police officer whom she met in the park was made during her visits to the prison where her father was confined; that she put herself under his orders, to escape from Edward's importunities; that on the day he chased her to the ship, she did not see or recognise him, but that she went purposely by water from London to meet and receive her father, who, strange to say, was actually brought to the stairs on the Surrey side of the river in Maxwell's carriage, at the very moment that Ned was whistling and kicking his heels with the watermen at the landing-place on the other. Maria went ashore with the captain, as the waterman said, and returned to her residence, but not *via* Cockatoo Hall, which she never had visited, and which accounted for Mrs. Randolph's indignant denial of any acquaintance, on the part of her husband, with "no sort of young ladies whatsomever."

Of all the gabblings and tattlings since the days of Babel, never was any thing like the noise in Hanningham's drawing-room at this period. Lord Lessingham and Kate in one corner; Maria and Edward in another; Mr. Hanningham, and old Maxwell, and Moss in another: servants coming in — servants going out — it was perfectly confusing, astounding, and overwhelming.

"Pray," said Moss, when something like a calm occurred, "when shall I send for the vicar of Fudley cum Pipes? I see that 'll be the end on't."

Nobody answered the appeal; and if Kate had said any thing, she perhaps would have preferred some other joiner, since the last job the vicar had performed had not turned out exactly according to the expectation of the parties most concerned.

The elder Hanningham, in the course of an hour or two, found himself sufficiently strong to rejoin the party; and, as he expressed himself, his happiness was beyond the lot of man; and he left those around him to judge what his feelings must be towards Maxwell.

"I suspect," said Lord Lessingham, "that a trial will be made of your affection for that family — a Maxwell, a friend of mine, has a design, and a serious one too, of robbing you of the greatest treasure you possess, Mr. Hanningham."

"She *is* a treasure," said the old man, comprehending his lordship's meaning; "God bless her! Through my imprisonment, my trial, in my cell, nay to the very foot of the scaffold, was this beloved child my solace, my companion, my support; and to see her restored to the world — to happiness, I hope — repays all I have suffered. Mr. Maxwell," continued he, addressing Ned, "personally acquainted we have been but a short time — my son has told me your character — you are worthy of your father. If I have indeed a treasure to bestow, dearer, as it is to me, than my heart's blood, — it is yours."

The young people, apparently not at all disinclined to take advantage of any opportunity for so doing, again rushed into each other's arms; whereupon Moss, rising out of a soft downy armed chair in which he had been ensconced,

after the fashion of a diamond in cotton, said, "Well, now we have had enough of all this trash and gammon — what time do we dine?"

"I propose, Mr. Moss," said Lord Lessingham, "to have the honour of receiving you all at Richmond."

"Richmond!" said Moss; "what! not dine before *that?*"

"Every arrangement is made for your reception," said Charles; "and if Mrs. Apperton and Mrs. Hanningham will undertake to chaperone Miss Hanningham, I, on the part of myself and Ned Maxwell, pledge ourselves to entertain you and the elders, in a manner quite consistent with your views of comfort."

"Have you got a French cook, my lord?" said Moss.

"No; but a very liberal translation of one into English," said Lord Lessingham.

"Because, if you have got one of those night-capped creturs," said Moss, "that sprinkle salmon all over with capers and butter, by way of making it nice, and cram crawfish into turkies, with lumps of pudding round them, by way of sauce, I'd advise you to poke him into the river, and let one of your kitchen maids do me a nice hot mutton chop, with the gravy in him, or roast me a leg of the cretur entire."

"You shall order what you please, my dear Moss," said Charles; "you will find my villa Liberty Hall. You shall have your cigar, and 'ginnums-and-water,' out under a great tree; a monkey to play with, a cockatoo to worry, pigeons to feed, and one of the prettiest of the still-room maids to bring you the peas."

"That's right, Charley, my boy," said Moss; "you are one of the true sort, after all — no spoiling you, by making you a lord, at all events."

"I am likely to be spoiled," said Charles, "if good fortune and unmerited happiness can effect it. But we must not lose time in moralising, out of regard to your appetite, Moss: there are the carriages at the door, which will carry us all, and our servants — so let us away, and pass a day of happiness after an age of sorrow."

"Come," said Maxwell; "and let this be ever impressed

on your minds, my children — that however adverse what is profanely and idly called fate, may appear to set against us in this world, a firm reliance on the bounty of Providence will never be disappointed. There scarcely ever was a more striking instance of retributive justice than that which our own history exhibits — let others take courage from the results, and, while they put their trust in Heaven, fear no evils which assail them on earth."

Moss, who, although brother to the vicar of Fudley cum Pipes, had no particular turn for sermons, especially when delivered by the laity, now began to fidget and unsettle the ladies, who proceeded to put themselves in readiness to accept the very gratifying invitation of Lord Lessingham; and in less than half an hour the happy party left town for his beautiful villa. His lordship, Mrs. Apperton, Maxwell, and Moss, filling the britscha; and the Hanninghams, Miss Hanningham, and Ned Maxwell, stowed away in the barouche.

One additional line only is necessary to dispose of another performer in our drama—Mrs. Overall, *ci-devant* Epsworth. The Major, two months after his marriage, was expatiating earnestly upon some favourite topic, at the head of one of the marble staircases of his economical palace at Florence, when, in the enthusiasm of the moment, he lost his balance, pitched over the balustrades on his head, and was killed. His widow remained disconsolate only six months; and one of the first persons who paid Lord Lessingham a visit at Richmond, to congratulate him upon his accession to his title, was his old flame, returned to England, re-married to an Italian nobleman, with a landed estate of sixty-eight pounds per annum, which conferred upon her the title of Countess Latatatarina.

It would, under the circumstances, be scarcely desirable to carry this history any farther, lest we should find in the sequel that the widowhood of Mrs. Apperton were measured by the patience of her friend and cousin, the Countess. It will perhaps be sufficient to say, that at this present writing, there does not exist a happier couple than Lord and Lady Lessingham, or than Mr. and Mrs. Edward

Maxwell; that the old gentlemen play chess as well as ever; and that Godfrey Moss, sick of the absurdity of all "worldly creturs," has settled himself down in a happy retirement, where he finds —

——— "Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and '*faults*' in every thing."

THE END.

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